



## ESL Podcast 421 – Internet Dating

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### GLOSSARY

**Internet dating service** – an online business that helps people meet other people with similar interests so that they can begin a romantic relationship

\* Lisa met a man through an Internet dating service and two years later they were married.

**What do you have to lose?** – an expression meaning that one should do something, because nothing bad can happen as a result, but something good might happen

\* Craig told me that he wanted to apply for the job, but he didn't think he'd get it. I told him he should apply and said, "What do you have to lose?"

**to screen** – to review or look at things and decide whether they meet one's needs, are acceptable, or are good enough for something

\* The Human Resources Department screens all the job applications and decides which ones are good enough to request interviews.

**profile** – a short description that gives general information about something, especially about a person or company

\* This website has company profiles that show the full name of each company, the year it was created, and how much money it made last year.

**criterion** – something that one uses to judge another thing or to decide whether it meets one's needs

\* Mindy has three criteria for a husband: he must be handsome, kind, and intelligent.

**search** – the process of going to a website and entering words that describe what one is looking for, so that the website produces a list of possible matches

\* Raquel did a search and found more than one million pages on that topic.

**age range** – the minimum and maximum age of a group of people

\* At most high schools, the students' age range is from 14 to 18.

**hit** – a thing that meets one's criteria in a search

\* How many hits do you get when you search for your own name in Google?



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**to narrow down** – to become more specific in what one is looking for

\* There are more than 400 restaurants in the city, so we'll need to narrow down what we're looking for by picking the type of food we'd like to have for dinner.

**radius** – the distance from the middle of a circle to the edge; half of the diameter; within a specific area

\* How many coffee shops do you think there are within a five-mile radius?

**flattering** – attractive; something that makes one look attractive

\* Red is a very flattering color on you.

**promising** – with a lot of potential to be good or useful; something that seems good, interesting, or useful but hasn't been tested yet

\* The university offers scholarships to its most promising new students.

**white lie** – something that is not true but is not very important or serious; a minor, unimportant lie

\* When Aunt Charisa asked me whether I liked her dress, I told a white lie and said that I did, even though I really thought it was ugly.

**to misrepresent** – to say something that makes one believe something that isn't true

\* Ollie misrepresented himself by saying that he had never worked in the entertainment industry, when the truth was that he had never worked at all.

**trial membership** – a period of time when one can use a product or service for free to see if one likes it before buying it

\* ESL Podcast doesn't offer a trial membership, but you can see a sample Learning Guide for free before deciding to become a member.



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**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

1. How could Kevin narrow down the search criteria?
  - a) By increasing the age range.
  - b) By changing the location.
  - c) By specifying a profession.
  
2. What does Eun mean by saying, “She’s promising”?
  - a) The woman is engaged to be married.
  - b) The woman seems like a good match for Kevin.
  - c) The woman makes a lot of promises in her profile.

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**WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?**

**screen**

The verb “to screen,” in this podcast, means to review or look at things and decide whether they meet one’s needs, are acceptable, or are good enough for something: “His secretary screens all his emails, deciding whether they are important enough for him to respond to.” Sometimes the verb “to screen” means to learn more about a person to find out whether he or she has done things against the law: “It’s a good idea for parents to screen babysitters before they leave them alone with their children.” The verb “to screen (someone) for (something)” can mean to find out whether someone has a disease: “All the children were screened for tuberculosis.” Finally, the verb “to screen” means to show a movie in a theater: “This week, the theater is screening a famous movie, Casablanca.”

**hit**

In this podcast, the word “hit” means a thing that meets one’s criteria in a search: “If you don’t find very many hits on a search, make sure that you’ve spelled the word correctly.” The word “hit” also means a visit to a website: “Our site gets more than 3,000 hits each day.” If something is “a hit,” it is very popular, especially in music or the movies: “The movie Spiderman was a hit at the movies last summer.” The phrase “to be a hit with (someone)” means to be liked very much by someone: “That new band is a hit with teenage girls.” Finally, a “hit



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man” is a person who is hired to kill someone illegally: “The crazy person wanted to hire a hit man to kill the president.”

### CULTURE NOTE

Internet dating services have become extremely popular in the past few years because they give people an easy way to meet each other. The websites let people specify search criteria to find the type of people they are looking for. For example, they can choose the age, profession, location, religion, and “marital status” (whether someone is single, married, divorced, or widowed) of the people they might like to date, as well as how often they “drink” (drink alcohol) and what they do for fun.

Some “specialty” (specialized) dating services “cater to” (serve) specific groups of the population by only letting certain types of people participate on the site. For example, some specialty dating sites are made especially for “seniors” (older people, usually more than 65 years old). Seniors who want to date only other seniors might find it easier to “make a match” (find a person for a romantic relationship) on one of the specialty sites than on a “general” (not specialized) site.

Other specialty dating sites are created just for “homosexuals” or “gays” (men who like to date other men) and “lesbians” (women who like to date other women). On general sites, these people might have a hard time finding the type of people they are looking for. On a specialty site for homosexuals, they will find more people who are like them.

Many specialty dating sites are based on religion. People sometimes like to date and marry “within their religion” (or date and marry people who have the same religion as they do). Specialty sites cater to these interests. Some sites are for Christians, others are for Jews, others are for Muslims, etc. When people “register” (sign up), they know that everyone else on that site will share similar religious beliefs.

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



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### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 421: Internet Dating.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast number 421. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful, sunny Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at [eslpod.com](http://eslpod.com). You can download a Learning Guide for this episode that contains all of the vocabulary, definitions, sample sentences, additional definitions, cultural notes, comprehension questions, free money, and a complete transcript of this episode. Well, there's no free money, but there is all the rest of that!

This episode is called "Internet Dating." It's about finding love on the Internet. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Kevin: I know a lot of people are doing it, but I'm not so sure about trying an Internet dating service.

Eun: What do you have to lose? This website says that it screens all of its members. Let's look at some of the profiles.

Kevin: All right. We have to select the criteria for a search. Let's see...gender – "female"; location – "Los Angeles"; age range – "26 to 35."

Eun: Wow, you got 243 hits. I think you'd better narrow down the search criteria.

Kevin: Okay, I'll search for people who live within a 50-mile radius. That gives us 72 hits.

Eun: Click on that one. Let's see. This woman is 29 and she's an accountant. She's very pretty.

Kevin: Do you think people would upload any photos that weren't flattering?



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Eun: Still, I think she's promising, don't you? Anyway, who doesn't tell a few white lies in their dating profile? It's not like you're misrepresenting yourself. If you sign up for a trial membership, you'll have to do the same thing.

Kevin: Will I? What will I need to lie about?

Eun: Nothing, nothing. You're perfect just the way you are.

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with Kevin saying to Eun, "I know a lot of people are doing it, but I'm not so sure about trying an Internet dating service." He says he's "not so sure," that means he has doubts, he doesn't know if this is a good idea. An "Internet dating service" is an online business that helps you find and meet other people you may be romantically interested in.

Eun says, "What do you have to lose?" This expression, "what do you have to lose," means that you should do something because nothing bad can happen as a result. It isn't going to hurt you in anyway: "What do you have to lose?" This is sometimes said when someone, perhaps, is in a desperate situation, in a situation where they don't have a lot of other options and doing something will be better than doing nothing.

Eun says, "This website says that it screens all of its members." To "screen," as a verb, here means to review or to look at something and decide if it is acceptable or if it is good enough. If you go into a company the company will screen the people who want to work there – the people who are applying for the job. They will look at their information and decide who they want to interview, for example. "Screen" has a couple of different meanings in English; take a look at our Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

Eun suggests to Kevin that they look at some of the profiles. A "profile" is usually a short description that gives some general information about something, especially a person or a company. So, on these Internet dating sites they have profiles of different people that describe them in a general way. Kevin says, "All right (okay). We have to select the criteria for a search." "Criteria" is the plural for the noun "criterion" (criterion). A "criterion" is something that you use judge someone or some other thing, some sort of rule or standard that you use to decide if something is good enough or not. So for example, if you are applying



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for a job one of the criteria may be that you have a college degree (you graduated from college). That’s an example of “criteria.”

Well, Kevin says they have to select the criteria for a search. To “search” for something is to look for something, so when we are on the Internet we can search for things. In this case, Kevin is searching for his love, his true love, somewhere out there in the world. Kevin gives some criteria. He begins with gender – male or female, Kevin is looking for a female; location – here in Los Angeles; and finally age range. The “range” of something is the highest and lowest values or number of something. “Age range” refers to the ages of the people, in this case, that Kevin is looking for. So the age range, for example, for those who go to high school in the United States would be 14 to 18, from 14 years old up to 18 years old. Kevin is looking for women between the ages of 26 and 35; that’s his age range. Men often look for women who are their age or younger, and this is, perhaps, the case with Kevin. We don’t know. Kevin could be an old person – 45, for example, like me, looking for a younger woman. Well, not me, Kevin!

Back to the story: Eun says, “Wow, you got 243 hits.” A “hit,” when you are talking about searching for something, is finding something that meets your criteria (that fits your criteria). So if you put in, for example, ESL Podcast and you search in a search engine, such as Google, the first hit (the first link) you will see on the page is for ESL Podcast, this podcast. That’s a “hit.” “Hit” has several meanings in English – different meanings; take a look at our Learning Guide for some more explanations.

So Eun says that Kevin got 243 women who live in Los Angeles between the ages of 26 and 35 who are registered on this Internet dating service. Eun says, “I think you’d better narrow down the search criteria.” To “narrow down” is a two-word phrasal verb meaning to become more specific in what you are looking for, to be more specific. In this case, he has to find more specific criteria so that there are fewer hits; he has too many, right now.

Kevin says, “Okay, I’ll search for people who live within a 50-mile radius.” “Radius” (radius) is the distance between the middle of a circle and the edge of the circle. It’s used here to specify or to describe an area around where, in this case, Kevin lives. So a “50-mile radius” would be anything that would be 50 miles from Kevin’s house, or anyone. When he does that, he gets 72 hits – 72 women who live within 50 miles of his house.



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Eun says, “Click on that one.” She selects one and says, “Let’s see. This woman is 29 and she’s an accountant.” She works in a business where she takes care of the money, figuring out how much money the company has, for example. “She’s very pretty,” Eun says. Kevin says, “Do you think people would upload any photos that weren’t flattering?” “Flattering,” as an adjective, means attractive, something that makes you look attractive. So what Kevin is asking here is, well, of course the picture that the woman puts on the website is beautiful, because everyone would put the most beautiful photograph of themselves they could find. It’s clear that Kevin is a little “skeptical,” that is, he has some doubts about whether this woman really is very pretty.

Eun says, “Still (meaning even though, despite what you say), I think she’s promising.” When something is “promising,” here we mean it has a lot of potential to be good or useful. It’s something that seems good or interesting, but you’re not quite sure – you’re not certain, but it looks good. Eun says this woman looks promising. “Anyway,” she says (in any case), “who doesn’t tell a few white lies in their dating profile?” A “white lie” is a small or unimportant lie, something that isn’t true but it isn’t serious. So for example, if you meet a woman and you say to her, “I’m five feet, 10 inches,” when you’re really five feet, nine inches. Well, that’s a “white lie,” you want to make yourself seem taller. But if you tell her that you are single when, in fact, you are married, well, that would be a little bit more than a white lie!

So, Eun is saying that people sometimes don’t tell the complete truth in their dating profiles on these Internet websites. Eun says, “It’s not like you’re misrepresenting yourself.” To “misrepresent” means to say something to make someone believe that thing, but it isn’t true. So if I said I’m single, when in reality I’m married – and I am married – then that would be misrepresenting myself. I would be essentially telling someone something that wasn’t true.

Well, Eun says that a few white lies (a few exaggerations) isn’t the same as misrepresenting yourself. She then says, “If you sign up for a trial membership, you’ll have to do the same thing.” If you “sign up,” if you become a member, you will have to do the same thing. Some websites offer what is called a “trial (trial) membership,” which is where you can sign up for the membership for a week or a month, some period of time, to see if you like it, and then if you like it you can continue to use it by paying for it.

Kevin says, “Will I?” meaning will it be necessary for me, also, to tell some white lies. “What will I need to lie about?” Eun says, “Nothing, nothing. You’re perfect





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just the way you are.” Of course, Eun doesn’t really believe that, but she wants Kevin to think that he’s perfect.

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

[start of dialogue]

Kevin: I know a lot of people are doing it, but I’m not so sure about trying an Internet dating service.

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Kevin: Will I? What will I need to lie about?

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[end of dialogue]

The script for this episode was written by someone who never tells a white lie, Dr. Lucy Tse.



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From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on ESL Podcast.

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