



TOPICS

American cities: Portland, Oregon; Take Me Out to the Ballgame; ocean versus sea, ability versus capability

GLOSSARY

metropolitan area – a city and its surrounding area; a city and all the smaller cities around it that are actually connected to it

* New York City has 8.2 million residents, but the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island metropolitan area has almost 19 million residents.

confluence – the geographic place where two bodies of water meet

* Many towns and cities are built at the confluence of rivers, because those locations have a good water supply.

to kayak – to ride in a one-person boat on a river, lake, or ocean, using a long stick with wide ends to control the direction and speed, where the boat often flips over

* My friend told me that when I am kayaking, I should wear a helmet so that my head doesn't hit the rocks if my kayak flips over.

to hike – to go on long walks in the forests or mountains, away from cities

* Whenever they go hiking, they take a backpack with lots of food and water, a flashlight, warm clothes, and a medical kit.

to snowshoe – to walk around in the snow with special large nets tied to the bottom of one's shoes so that one can walk on top of the snow without falling into it

* Snowshoeing works because the special snowshoes distribute your weight over a larger area, letting you walk on top of the snow without sinking into it.

environmentally conscious – aware of how one's actions affect the natural world; aware of environmental problems and doing things in one's own life to prevent and/or fix those problems

* If Americans were more environmentally conscious, they would buy fewer things and drive their cars less often.



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anthem – an official song that is associated with a country or organization

* At the Olympic Games, the national anthem of the winner's country is always played during the award ceremonies.

seventh-inning stretch – the break during the seventh of the nine parts (innings) in a baseball game

* During the seventh-inning stretch, when everyone else was singing Take Me Out to the Ballgame, Cheryl went to buy some beer and hot dogs.

to root – to cheer; to clap and shout to encourage a person or team to do well; to noisily show one's support for a person or team, especially at a sporting event

* Yevgeny rooted so much at the game yesterday that today he can hardly talk!

strike – the act of a baseball player swinging the bat but missing the ball

* The audience was disappointed by the baseball player's third strike.

ocean – one of five very large bodies of salty water that cover the Earth's surface

* Earth has five oceans: the Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, Antarctic, and Arctic Oceans.

sea – one of many large bodies of salty water that cover the Earth's surface

* How many islands are in the Caribbean Sea?

ability – being able to do something well, usually used when talking about people

* People who have the ability to speak multiple languages are able to work in international business more easily than those who speak only English.

capability – an ability to do something well, usually used when talking about companies, technology, or countries

* She wants to buy a cell phone with more capabilities, like taking photos and accessing email.



WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

Homebrewing

“Brewing” is the process of making beer and other alcoholic beverages through “fermentation” (a process where yeast changes sugar into alcohol). Many people are fascinated by the process of making beer and often visit “breweries” (large companies that make beer). “Microbreweries” (small companies that make beer) are becoming increasingly popular as Americans begin to “favor” (prefer) local microbrewery beer brands over large, national beer brands.

Some Americans “take this a step further” (go beyond something) by brewing their own beer at home. This is known as “homebrewing.” The beer they make is usually for personal “consumption” (eating or drinking), although some homebrewers make their own “labels” (special stickers to put on bottles) and give the beer away to their friends for free. In most states, it is legal for homebrewers to brew up to 100 gallons per person who is older than 21 and lives in the home, but no more than 200 gallons each year. Making more beer, or selling the brew to other people, is illegal, because the government wants to “tax” (get money for the government) these sales.

Many homebrewers invest a lot of time and money in the process. They need a lot of special “equipment” (machines to help one do something) and, of course, the “ingredients” (types of food that are used to make other types of food). However, they seem to enjoy the process of brewing just as much as they enjoy drinking the beer! Many homebrewers are members of brewing clubs, where they can share ideas with other homebrewers.

Many homebrewers bring their beer to “amateur” (not professional) brewing competitions. “Judges” (people who taste the beers and decide which one is best) give out awards for the best brews.



COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 128.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 128. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

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On this Café, we're going to continue our series on American cities, focusing on the city of Portland, Oregon. We're also going to talk about a traditional song that we sing at almost every baseball game called Take Me Out to the Ballgame. We're going to talk about its origins, customs, and the meaning of its lyrics. And as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

Our first topic today is Portland, Oregon as a continuation of our series on American cities. Oregon, what some people call "Oregon" if they're not from that state, is a state located in the Pacific Northwest. The "Pacific Northwest" is the geographic region – the area in the northwestern United States and southwestern Canada. The U.S. and Canada share what we call this area of the Pacific Northwest. It consists of, or has as its parts, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia, Canada, so the U.S. states of Oregon and Washington, and the Canadian province of British Columbia. Oregon borders, or is next to, the Pacific Ocean on the west, with California and Nevada to the south, Idaho to the east, and the state of Washington to the north.

Portland is in northwestern Oregon and it is the state's largest city, with about 500,000 people, and about two million people in the metropolitan area. So, in the city of Portland itself there's a half a million, but in the areas around Portland there are two million people. A "metropolitan area" is a city plus the surrounding areas that are technically outside of the city limits, or the city border, but really feels like part of the same city. A metropolitan area includes all of the smaller cities around it, what we usually call "suburbs." Although Portland is the largest city in the state, it is not the state capitol. The capitol of Oregon is Salem, which is much smaller than Portland and further to the south. Be careful not to confuse



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Salem, Oregon with another famous city, Salem, Massachusetts. There are at least two famous cities in the U.S. named Salem.

Most of the state's major businesses are located in Portland. Nike, Intel, and Xerox have a large presence in the city. Nike, the famous company that makes running shoes and clothes for playing sports, was actually founded in Eugene, Oregon. When we say it was "founded," we mean it was started as a company in Eugene, Oregon, but it is now based in Portland; the company has its headquarters in Portland. Portland has many Nike stores and visitors often enjoy taking a tour of the Nike buildings. So if you go to Portland, put that on your list of things to do.

Portland is located at the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. "Confluence" (confluence) is the place where two bodies of water meet; in this case two rivers come together. The city of Portland has some very beautiful parks and bridges that have been built around it and over these rivers. There are also many bicycle paths and running trails that are closed to cars. A "running trail" is a path – a place where you can, obviously, run, if you like to run. I prefer the walking path myself!

Many of the people who live in Portland, and in Oregon generally, are outdoor enthusiasts. An "enthusiast" (enthusiast) is someone who enjoys doing something very much. He or she has a lot of enthusiasm for an activity. The word "enthusiast" comes from the word "enthusiasm," to really like to do something. People in Portland, Oregon are "outdoor enthusiasts," meaning they like to go outside, out of the house, and do things. They like to do things such as running, riding bicycles, kayaking, and hiking. "Kayaking" (kayaking) is riding in a small one-person boat on a river, a lake, or even in the ocean. "Hiking" means going on long walks in the forest or the mountains. All of these outdoor activities are very common in Oregon, which is why I don't live in Oregon. I don't really like kayaking or hiking – riding in a car, that I like!

On a clear day in Portland, a day without too many clouds, you can see the beautiful snow-covered mountain called Mount Hood. We sometimes give the name of a mountain by using the word "mount" (mount) in front of it, such as Mount Rushmore, Mount Hood, Mount Washington. People can easily drive from the city of Portland to the mountains around it, especially to Mount Hood, to enjoy their outdoor activities. If you go up into the mountains where there's snow, you can ski, you can also go snowshoeing in the wintertime. "To snowshoe" (snowshoe – one word) means that you put these very large nets on the bottom of your shoe so you can walk on top of the snow without falling into it – without



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going down into the snow. This net distributes your weight so that you don't go down deep into the snow. The things that you put on your feet are called "snowshoes," and the verb is "to snowshoe," or "to go snowshoeing."

It rains a lot in Portland. In fact, it rains about nine months out of the year! Nine out of every 12 months in the year, you can expect to have a lot of rain in Portland. Oregon, in general, and Washington to the north are famous in the United States for being places where there's lots of rain. Another reason I don't live in Oregon! People often wear rain jackets and carry umbrellas, but most Oregonians – people who live in Oregon are called "Oregonians" – aren't bothered by the rain, they don't mind it. It makes everything very green and beautiful. Thanks to this weather, roses grow very well in Oregon, and Portland is sometimes called the "City of Roses." We have a city here in southern California that also is called the "City of Roses," Pasadena, California. Grapes also grow well in Oregon, so in the area around Portland there are many "vineyards" (vineyards), or places where wine is made. There are many small companies that also make beer; these are called "microbreweries." A "brewery" (brewery) is a place where you make beer, so a "microbrewery" is a very small brewery, since the word "micro" means small.

People in Portland tend to be more environmentally conscious than Americans in the other parts of the country. When I say they tend to be, I mean they usually are more environmentally conscious. To be "environmentally conscious" means that they care about how their actions affect the natural world around them. They don't want, for example, to "pollute," to make the water or the air dirty. "To be conscious of something" means to be aware of something; in this case, they are aware of the environment – the world around them. This is why bicycle riding is so popular in Portland.

In short, Portland is a beautiful city. If you like nature and outdoor activities – and lots of rain – then you should definitely visit Portland!

Now let's talk about one of my favorite topics, baseball. It is the most famous American pastime. A "pastime" is a hobby, or something that people enjoy doing. Baseball used to be the most popular American sport, but in recent years American football has become very popular as well; so has basketball and to a lesser extent, soccer. Nevertheless, baseball holds a special place in the hearts of many Americans. It is considered to be the most American sport – by those who live here.



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Take Me Out to the Ballgame is a well-known song that has become an unofficial anthem of baseball. An anthem, “anthem,” is a song that we associate usually with a particular country or organization. Most countries have a national anthem. In the U.S., our national anthem is called the Star Spangled Banner. A “banner” is another word for a flag. Take Me Out to the Ballgame, then, is baseball’s unofficial anthem; it’s the song that people associate with baseball. The “lyrics,” or words for this song, were written in 1908, 100 years ago, by a man named Jack Norworth. The music was written by Albert von Tilzer. Although the song is all about baseball, the people who wrote it had never actually been to a baseball game – very strange, I know!

This song became extremely popular in the early 1900s, but today most people only hear it, and sing it, at a baseball game. Take Me Out to the Ballgame is sung during what we call the “seventh-inning stretch.” Baseball has nine periods – nine sections of time – that you play. These periods are called “innings.” In the seventh inning – in the middle of the seventh inning there is a time where everyone gets up to stretch. “To stretch” is to stand up and move your body, usually to extend the muscles in your arms and legs. You have been sitting for a long time, so now you are “stretching,” you are getting up to move your muscles around.

Every American, or at least every American who has seen a baseball game probably knows the words to this song. So, everybody stands up and they start singing this song in the middle of the seventh inning. I’m going to sing the main part of the song, what we would call the “chorus” (chorus). The “chorus” is the part of the song that repeats many times. Listen as I sing; try not to plug your ears – try not to put your fingers in your ears! When I’m finished, I’ll talk a little bit about what the words mean.

Take me out to the ballgame,
Take me out with the crowd.
Buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack,
I don’t care if I never get back.
Let me root, root, root for the home team,
If they don’t win, it’s a shame.
For it’s one, two, three strikes, you’re out,
At the old ball game.

One more time! No, just kidding!



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The first line of the chorus “Take me out to the ball game,” which means I want to go see a ballgame and I am asking you to take me with you – to take me to a game. The second line is “Take me out with the crowd,” this means I want to be with the large group of people, the crowd at the game. The “crowd,” in this case, are the people who are watching the game.

“Buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack” refers to foods that are traditionally sold and eaten at a baseball game. Peanuts are sold, with salt on the outside of what we call the “shell” of the peanut. Cracker Jack is a kind of sweet popcorn with nuts. It’s usually sold in a small, little red box. People go around selling these foods along with things to drink, such as soda and beer. You don’t have to, usually, get up and leave your seat to buy them; people will come to you when they sell them. Usually they will throw you a bag of peanuts or a box of Cracker Jack and then you give the money to the person next to you, who gives it to the person next them, until it reaches the person who’s selling the peanuts or Cracker Jack. Many people buy these foods when they go to baseball games; they’re not good, nutritious foods – not good for your body – but they really taste good.

The song continues, “I don’t care if I never get back,” meaning there’s no problem if we stay at the game forever, forgetting to come home. The idea is that the game will be so much fun we won’t want to leave. Notice here the grammatical error of using two negatives in a sentence. Normally, we would say, “I don’t care if I ever get back,” not “never get back.” But using a double negative gives the song a bit more popular appeal. It’s used sort of as a way of showing that it is a song of the common, simple people – the average person – not an educated song. Baseball is a popular sport; everyone can watch it.

Then the lyrics are, “Let me root, root, root for the home team.” The verb “to root” (root) means to cheer, or to clap and shout. You’re shouting and clapping for the team you want to see win. In this song, we are rooting for the “home team,” or the team that is from the city where the game is being played. When people sing this song at a game, they often replace the words “home team” with the name of the team that is playing. For example, at a game in Los Angeles we would say, “Let me root, root, root for the Dodgers” instead of “home team.” The song continues, “If they don’t win it’s a shame,” meaning we will be disappointed or sad if they don’t win.

Finally, the song ends with, “For it’s one, two, three strikes, you’re out, at the old ball game.” In baseball, each time you try to hit the ball but miss it, it’s called a “strike” (strike). You can also get a strike if the pitcher, throwing the ball,



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throws it in a place where you should have tried to hit it. A player can miss the ball three times before they are what we would call “out,” meaning they are out of the play – they can no longer continue playing during that inning, or at least until later in the inning.

If you ever have an opportunity to go to an American baseball game, you can study these lyrics and sing along with everyone else during the seventh-inning stretch. Don't worry too much however; in most big professional baseball games, they put the words to the song up on the big scoreboard – the big place that they put messages so that you can just read it from there.

Now let's answer a few of your questions.

Our first question comes from Koki (Koki) in Japan. The question has to do with the difference between the words "sea" (sea) and "ocean" (ocean). Sometimes we use these two words to mean the same thing. However, there are other cases where they are used slightly differently – somewhat differently.

"Sea" is a large body of water, usually saltwater if, that is partly enclosed by land. In many cases, there are seas within the larger body of water, which we call the "ocean." For example, the Mediterranean Sea is actually connected to the Atlantic Ocean. If you go through the Straits of Gibraltar, in southern Spain or northern Morocco, you will go from the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean. Sometimes we use the word "sea" for something that is really a lake; the Caspian Sea and the Dead Sea are actually lakes, but we call them seas.

“Ocean” is also a large body of saltwater. Usually we talk about the five oceans of the world: the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, the Arctic Ocean, and the Southern Ocean (Antarctic Ocean).

Denis (Denis) from Russia wants to know the difference between the words "ability" and "capability."

"Ability" means being able to do something, to have a skill or a talent, to have the capacity to do something. For example: "My dog has the ability to do seven different tricks" – he doesn't actually do them but he has the ability to do them, he could do them.

"Capability" is sometimes used to mean the same thing as "ability." Usually, "capability" means a talent that has the potential – the possibility – for further development or use. For example, if a student doesn't do well on a test, his



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teacher may say that he has great capabilities – he has the possibility of doing better, but he needs to work harder; he needs to develop those capabilities.

"Ability," then, usually refers to a developed skill or characteristic. "Capability" often means the potential to have an ability if you work on it and develop it. That's not always the difference, but that's one possible difference between the two words.

If you have a question for our Café you can email us. Our email address is eslpod@eslpod.com.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. We'll see you next time on the English Café.

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