



TOPICS

American Cities: Salt Lake City; university admissions; within versus inside versus interior; so much for; to want out

GLOSSARY

to persecute – to treat someone unfairly or in a mean way, often because of their race or religious/political beliefs

* Those who didn't agree with the government were persecuted for years.

temple – a place to worship, such as a church, synagogue, or mosque

* The leader of our church raised money to build a new temple where everyone can meet and worship.

canyon – a low, deep area between mountains, usually created over many, many years by water flowing between higher, rocky land

* Let's walk up to the top of the canyon so we can get a better view of the sunset.

to be home to (something) – to be the place where something is; to be where something is located

* Los Angeles is home to many major movie-making companies.

admissions – the process of applying to go to a university and how the university decides which students to accept

* Before deciding whether to apply to a university, Jason wants to find out how that school handles admissions.

to get a feel for (something) – to become familiar with something; to know what something is like

* It took me a few weeks to get a feel for my new job since my new duties are very different from those of my old job.

due – required to be submitted by a certain date or time; must be received by a specific date or time

* The annual sales report is due on the manager's desk by 5:00 p.m. today.



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rank – a position within a group or list; one’s position compared to other people; a position in a list of numbered items as determined by performance or worth
* What is Chicago’s rank in the list of the largest cities in the United States?

top-tier school – a university that is considered one of the best; a school that has one of the highest rankings or positions among a group of schools
* Bernadette applied to three top-tier schools hoping she would get into at least one of them.

back-up school – a school that is not the student’s first choice, but is easier to be admitted into than the first choice school
* Jaspari is likely to get into all of the back-up schools he applied to.

to enroll – to register; to officially begin attending a school or a program
* Li and Ramon enrolled in a dance class offered at the community center.

deferred admission – when a university that has admitted a student allows the student to enroll later, usually one year later
* Not having enough money, William asked the university for deferred admission so he could work full-time for a year to earn enough to attend.

interior – inside; inner side; inner part of something
* The outside of his car is blue and the interior is black.

so much for – a phrase used when one’s plans will not happen; a phrase used when a person is giving up on a goal or plan because of circumstances he/she cannot control
* We had planned a four-day vacation, but my boss needed me to work. So much for our beach vacation!

to want out – to wish to be free of some commitment; to ask for an end to an agreement; to want to be out of a physical space that one is forced to stay in
* I know I agreed to help with the cooking, but I didn’t know you had invited 30 people. I want out!



WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

Early Decision and Early Action

Many American universities, especially top-tier schools, have early admission programs for admitting “freshman” (first year students) to the university. These early admission programs normally require students to submit their applications by the end of October of their “senior” (fourth; final) year of high school. These students receive a decision in mid-December. Students who apply for regular decision typically must submit their applications by January 1st, but don’t receive their admissions decision until after April 1st.

There are two kinds of early admissions programs: early decision and early action. Early decision programs require students who are given admission to “withdraw” (take back) applications to all other universities and enroll in the early decision school. Early decision programs also limits students to applying to one university for early admission. On the other hand, early action is not “binding,” so that if a student is admitted, he or she is not required to enroll there, and students may submit more than one early admission application.

Many top-tier universities like early admission programs because the number of students who receive early decision or action who actually enroll is higher than regular decision. However, many “critics” (people who have negative opinions about an issue) of early decision say that it is not a good idea to bind a student who is typically 17 or 18 years old to just one university. In addition, students who need “financial aid” (loans and other money given or lent to students who don’t have enough money to pay for school) are not able to compare which university offers a better option if they are admitted with early decision. This, some critics say, favor wealthy students who don’t need financial aid. Because of these criticisms, some universities ended their early admission programs. These include Harvard and Princeton, two of the most “prestigious” (well-respected) universities in the U.S.



COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 158.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 158. 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. Today we are going to talk about Salt Lake City, in the state of Utah. We'll also take a look at university admissions issues. How do people get into the college or university that they want to get into here in the United States. And as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

We continue our series on Americans cities in this episode. Today we are going to talk about a city in the state of Utah called Salt Lake City. Utah is located in the western part of the United States; it's to the west of Colorado and to the east of Nevada, roughly. Salt Lake City is the largest city in Utah. It has that name because it is next to something called the Great Salt Lake, which is the largest saltwater lake in the Americas, in North and South America. Normally, lakes are what we call freshwater lakes, and water in the ocean – in the seas is typically saltwater, at least in the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. So, it's somewhat unusual to have a lake in the middle of a country that is a saltwater lake.

Salt Lake City was “founded,” or created in 1847 by a man named Brigham Young. He was the leader of the Mormons, a religious group of Christians who belong to something called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, which sometimes is just called LDS. “Latter-day” means recently or more recently.

The Mormons followed Brigham Young to the state of Utah because they were being persecuted for their religious beliefs. To “persecute” (persecute) someone means to treat someone unfairly or in a mean way. Many of the first people who came to live in the United States came to North America because they were



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being persecuted for their religious or political beliefs back in their own countries in Europe. Many wanted to create a country with religious freedom, where people can follow any religion or no religion. However, the Mormons didn't feel that they had religious freedom, so they went westward, they moved toward the west to the state of Utah. They moved there in part because there was no one else living there. Utah is a very dry, hot, desert-like state. They wanted to practice their religion without anyone else persecuting them, so that's why they went to somewhere where no one else was living, or at least no other white settlers were living. There were Native Americans in Utah, as there were in all of the different states of the U.S.

Today there's only about 180,000 people who live in Utah's largest city, Salt Lake City. Many of them are not Mormons, though certainly the majority of the population in Utah, and in Salt Lake City, are Mormon. There are many different Mormon "sites," or places to visit in the city. Many of these sites are open to visitors, meaning that tourists and other people can go see them. Perhaps one of the more places to go is Temple Square, where you can see the Salt Lake Temple. A "temple" (temple) is a place of worship, like a church, a synagogue, or a mosque. Temple Square has many buildings, including perhaps the most famous building, the Tabernacle. The Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City is like a large temple or church. Inside of the Tabernacle – inside of the temple – you will also be able to hear people singing with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. A "choir" is a group of people who sing. In this case, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir is one of the most famous singing choirs in the United States. Many Americans have CDs or recordings of Christmas music, for example, sung by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. It's a huge choir, many people. You can take a tour of the Salt Lake Tabernacle – or the Mormon Tabernacle.

Many people also go to the state of Utah and to Salt Lake City to see some of the national parks that are "nearby," or not very far from the city. One of the more famous ones is called the Bonneville Salt Flats. These are very flat areas that are, you can guess, covered or full of salt. In some places, the salt is six feet deep, or almost two meters. It is, apparently, a beautiful place to visit. I have been to Salt Lake City, but I have never been to the Bonneville Salt Flats. There are also many mountains that are popular for skiing in the wintertime near Salt Lake City. There are several famous "canyons," which are low, deep areas between mountains, usually created over many, many years by water flowing through or between the rocky land – the land full of rocks. The most famous canyon would be the Grand Canyon. But that's located not in Utah but in the state of Arizona, which is to the south.



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Salt Lake City is also famous because it was the home of the 2002 Winter Olympics, and it was considered a successful Olympics. They had successful operations at the Olympics. The person who organized those Olympics was a man by the name of Mitt Romney, who ran for president of the United States this year – for the “nomination,” for the ability to represent one of the two big political parties, the Republican Party, but he lost. But he, apparently, organized a good Olympics.

Salt Lake City is also home to several universities, When we it is “home to,” we mean it is a place where you can find that thing. For example, beautiful Los Angeles is home to Hollywood, where movies and television shows are made. It’s home to the Center for Educational Development – very important! New York City is home to the Statue of Liberty. Well, Salt Lake City is home to the University of Utah, Brigham Young University, Westminster College, and many other smaller colleges and universities. So if you have a chance to visit Salt Lake, you might enjoy seeing some of the Mormon sites as well as the natural beauty around the city.

When I visited Salt Lake City, I was only there for 24 hours. I was giving a presentation for a group of teachers. So, I really didn’t get to see the city very well, but perhaps next time I will.

Speaking of universities, since we were talking about universities, let’s jump or switch to or change to our next topic, which is university admissions: how you get into a university in the U.S. The word “admissions” comes from the verb to admit, or to let someone in a certain place, in this case the university. University admissions refers to what students have to do to apply to go to a university and how the university decides which students it is going to accept – it is going to admit or allow to study there.

High school students who want to study at a university usually begin thinking about college when they are “juniors” in high school, or their third year of their four-year high school. They usually begin by getting by getting what are called “viewbooks” from the universities they are interested in. A “viewbook” is a small book that the university creates to show the students what it has to offer. Because there are some many universities in the United States, universities have to, in essence or basically, sell themselves to the students, because students have so many different choices – so many different options. The viewbook is sort of like an advertisement for the university or college.



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A viewbook usually has many photographs of the university and the city where the university is located. The viewbook also lists the types of things that students can study at the university. It also has information about extracurricular activities, the things that students do when they are not studying or in the classroom – the legal things that they can do! After looking at the viewbooks, most high school students usually try to visit the universities that they are most interested in, often with their parents. They want to get a feel for the schools. To “get a feel for” something means to become familiar with it so that you know what it is like. On our website we offer a sample Learning Guide for free so that you can get a feel for our Learning Guides and decide whether you want to become a member to get more of them. So, that’s to get a feel for something. So these viewbooks allow students to get a feel for the particular university. Nowadays, you can probably download these viewbooks in PDF format from most university websites.

When high school students are “seniors,” or in their fourth and final year of high school, they begin to apply to the universities they are most interested in. It’s very common in the U.S. for students to apply to more than one university just in case they don’t get the one top choice, their first choice they would most like to attend. Some students, I think, apply to 10 or 15 or more universities. With the Internet, it has become easier to apply to many universities. But typically, a student will apply to a very difficult school; they may also apply to a school that is easier but still somewhat difficult, and then they’ll apply to what we call a “safety” school, or a “back-up” school, a school or a university that is very easy to get into just in case they don’t get into the ones they really want to go to, at least they have the option of one college where they know they will probably be accepted. That’s a safety school or a back-up school.

I applied for two universities, one that was difficult to get into, and one that I knew I could get into. This was way back in 1981. I was able to get into both universities, but I didn’t have enough money to go to the best one. But that’s okay!

At most universities, the applications to get into that university are due in February or March. If we say something is “due” (due) we mean that they must be submitted or sent by a specific date. For example, if you say the application is due March 15th that means that the university must receive the application from you by March 15th. Universities then review the applications; they read them and they let students know whether they have been accepted as students. The applications ask about the classes that they have studied in high school. They often ask the student to write one or more “essays,” which are short pieces of



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writing that talk about themselves or some particular issue. This is to allow the admissions committee to see whether the person can write, whether they are considered intelligent enough or interesting enough to go to that university.

Some universities offer early admission. This means that high school students can apply in October or November of their senior year, and the university will let them know whether they have been accepted, usually by December or January. This is called “early admission” because normally admit their students in the spring of the year. Other universities have what is called “rolling admissions,” which means students can apply either all year round – the entire year – or for several months during the year. The university reviews these rolling admissions applications as it receives them and lets people know very soon after. With rolling admissions, the university doesn’t wait until all the applications have been received, they tell you right away. Rolling admissions are easier for the people who are in charge the admissions, what are called the “admission officers,” because they can work on fewer applications over a longer period of time. Again, only some universities and colleges allow you rolling admissions; many require that you submit your application in February or March to be admitted the following September – to start school in the following September.

Well, why does all this matter, why is this important? University admissions in many places are very competitive in the United States. When we say a university has “competitive” or “very competitive admissions,” we mean it is very difficult to get in because there are many more students applying to the university than there are places or space at the university. In some universities, famous ones such as Harvard or Yale, there may be 10 times as many people applying as they have room for.

Many organizations and websites “rank” universities; they evaluate them, they look at them and they tell you who’s number one, who’s number two, who’s number three, and so forth. To “rank” means to put things in a certain order, from the best to the worst. Sometimes we refer to “top-tier schools” or “top-tier universities.” These are the universities that have the highest rankings, universities like Yale, Harvard, or Princeton. A second-tier school isn’t quite as good as these schools, but it is still considered very good. And then you have third and fourth-tier schools that are not considered to be as good as the top or second-tier schools.

Sometimes, after students have been accepted at a university, they might decide that they aren’t ready to “enroll,” or start school right away. Sometimes a student needs to take care of a sick parent, or perhaps they want to travel for a year



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before they begin their studies. Those students might ask for a deferred admission. To “defer” (defer) means to delay something or to do something later than you had first planned. Deferred admission allows the student to enroll one year later. So if you applied for admission in the fall of 2009, and you deferred your admission, you’d be able to attend that school in the fall of 2010.

Now let’s answer a few of your questions.

Our first question comes from Marcus (Marcus) in Brazil. Marcus wants to know the meanings of the words “within,” “inside,” and “interior.” All three of these words refer to the inner space or inner part of something.

“Within” and “inside” may be used before an object to connect it with another word in the sentence, in other words, as a preposition. For example you could say, “I’m going to travel within a month.” That means in the next 30 days. Or, “The television is inside the box.” Once again, “within” and “inside,” there, are prepositions. It can also refer to a place: “the inside of the car.” That way, it’s used as a noun. Or, “the inside of a hotel.”

“Interior” (interior) means the same thing, here: the inside of something. You could say, “the interior of the hotel.” Interior is opposite of exterior. Exterior is the outside; interior is the inside. You can also use “inside” and “interior” to describe something as an adjective. You could say the “Interior Minister,” that is, the government official who is responsible for the policies inside a country. Or you could talk about “interior design,” designing, deciding where things go inside of a house for example. You could say the “inside story,” the story that is only known to a very small number people involved in a situation.

So, “within” and “inside” can be prepositions. “Inside” and “interior” can be nouns, and “inside” and “interior” can also be adjectives.

Thamirez (Thamirez) from a country not specified, I don’t know where they’re from. The question has to do with two expressions: “so much for” and “to want out.”

“So much for” is a phrase we use when the thing that you had planned doesn’t happen. It’s a phrase to show that you are giving up on – you are abandoning your goal or plan because the situation has changed and you can’t control it. For example if your computer dies – if you computer breaks, you will have to spend money to fix it, and maybe you were going to use that money to go on a vacation. You might say, “So much for my vacation,” meaning I can no longer take my



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vacation. Usually, the phrase is used to express disappointment, when something bad has happened. Or, if for example your neighbor's children are outside and they're yelling and screaming – just an example! That may cause you to say, "So much for a quiet afternoon," meaning I will no longer have a quiet afternoon because my neighbor's children are outside crying.

Finally, to "want out" means to ask for an end to some agreement, to wish to be free of some commitment. For example: "Boris wanted out of the contract," meaning he wanted to end the agreement – to end the contract. We often use the preposition "of" after: "Jean wanted out of her marriage." She wanted to divorce – to end her marriage: she wanted out.

We hope you don't want out of ESL Podcast. If you have questions or comments you can email us. Our email address is eslpod@eslpod.com.

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

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