



TOPICS

Make-a-Wish Foundation; American Cities: Key West and the Florida Keys; must versus ought to versus need to; nuts and bolts; to buy (something)

GLOSSARY

foundation – an organization that has a lot of money and gives that money to other people and organizations

* Celebrities Brad Pitt and his wife Angelina Jolie have set up the Jolie-Pitt Foundation to help sick or needy people around the world.

wish – something that one wants to happen but probably isn't going to happen

* Taka wished that he could invent a robot that would do his homework for him every day.

to come true – to have something (usually a wish) happen in real life; to have something that one hoped for become real

* If you study hard, your dream of becoming a doctor may come true.

to grant (something) – to give something to someone; to give one's permission for something to happen

* The fairy granted Amy any three wishes. After much thought, Amy decided that she wished for happiness, wealth, and love.

to be (something) when one grows up – to talk about what one wants to do when one is an adult; to have a profession or job that one wants to have or do when one becomes an adult

* Sasha is only four years old, but she has already decided that she wants to be an English teacher when she grows up.

honorary – a title given to people who haven't really earned the title or haven't done the work to get the title

* Although Bill Gates never graduated from Harvard University, Harvard University gave Bill Gates an honorary doctorate to honor his great work in technology.



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archipelago – a group of islands, or small areas of land that are surrounded by water

* The country of Japan is actually an archipelago that is made up of more than 3,000 islands.

hurricane – a large, powerful storm with a lot of wind that begins over the sea and then moves over the land

* A powerful hurricane tore over the Philippines, leaving many people injured and homeless.

ecotourism – a type of tourism where people go to learn about the natural environment in a place

* Ecotourism is a way for people to enjoy the beauty of nature without destroying it.

scuba diving – a type of sport using an oxygen tank (a container of air) and mask (a plastic cover over part of one's face) that involves swimming underwater to look at the beautiful plants and animals

* If you scuba dive in Australia's Great Barrier Reef, you'll see amazing marine creatures that you've never seen before.

cruise ships – large ships that people travel on for vacation; large ships with rooms for sleeping, eating, entertainment, and much more that people spend several nights on to relax and travel

* For my mom's birthday, I sent her and dad on a four-day vacation on a luxury cruise ship.

seashell – the hard, protective shape that protects some sea animals; a part of a sea animal's body that is hard and used for protection

* As we walked along the beach, we picked up beautiful seashells of all shapes and sizes.

southernmost point – the farthest south that a place reaches

* China is so large that its northernmost point is next to Russia, where it experiences very cold weather, and its southernmost point is Hainan Island, which experiences hot, tropical weather.

must – have to; something that is required or very important

* If we want to travel to another country, we must first apply for a passport.



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ought to – should; showing that something is a good idea

* I ought to write Aunt Bess a thank you note for sending me a birthday gift.

need to – have to; to show that something is necessary

* Before we can run a marathon, we need to exercise regularly and eat a proper diet.

nuts and bolts – the basic and practical details of something

* I'm not an expert in computer programming, but I'm familiar with the nuts and bolts of how to use a computer.

to buy (something) – to believe that something is true; to accept something as real or true

* David told us that we could earn a lot of money if we invested in his business, but I'm not buying it because he's a terrible businessman.



WHAT INSIDERS KNOW

The U.S. Virgin Islands

While many people think of the United States as only the 50 states and Washington D.C., the U.S. is also made up of several other “territories.” These territories don’t have the same “rights” (advantages; benefits) as U.S. states, but they are considered part of the U.S. One of the more famous U.S. territories is a group of islands known as the U.S. Virgin Islands, located in the Caribbean Sea, just southeast of North America.

The U.S. Virgin Islands have an interesting and “rich” (full) history. The islands were first “discovered” (found; seen for the first time) by Christopher Columbus on his second sea “voyage” (trip) in 1493. He named the islands after a British Christian “saint” (a Christian that many people respect) and her followers. Throughout its history, the Virgin Islands were controlled by many different European countries. However, in 1917, the U.S. bought the Virgin Islands from the Danish for \$25 million in gold.

The U.S. Virgin Islands are made up of three main islands: Saint Croix, Saint John, and Saint Thomas, as well as other smaller islands. Altogether, the Virgin Islands are only as big as twice the size of Washington D.C.

“Nowadays” (today), the U.S. Virgin Islands are a popular “tourist destination” (place to visit), with over two million visitors a year. Most of these tourists visit the islands by cruise ship. The Virgin Islands attract many people because of its beautiful nature. Visitors to the Virgin Islands can participate in many activities.

To visit the Virgin Islands, U.S. citizens don’t even need a passport, but if you are not a U.S. citizen, you have to follow the standard U.S. travel “regulations” (rules) for visas. Since the Virgin Islands use the U.S. dollar and its official language is English, you will have no problem getting around. One thing to be careful about though: If you plan on driving in the Virgin Islands, remember that people there drive on the left side of the road! Driving on the right side – like in other parts of the U.S. – will get you into lots of trouble!



COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

You're listening to ESL Podcast's English Café number 163.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast's English Café episode 163. 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 talk about an American organization called the Make-a-Wish Foundation, and why it's famous here in the U.S. Then we'll continue our series on American cities, focusing on Key West and the Florida Keys. And as always, we'll answer a few of your questions. Let's get started.

On this Café, we're going to talk about a very famous American foundation. A "foundation" is an organization that usually has lots of money and gives that money to other people and organizations. You might have heard of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Bill Gates, of course, is the founder or creator of Microsoft and he has a lot of money. He and his wife Melinda created a foundation or an organization to give money to other people and other organizations that need it. Their foundation is mostly concerned with healthcare: doctors, hospitals, medicine – that sort of thing. But we're not going to talk about the Gates Foundation today. Instead, we're going to talk about the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

A "wish" is like a hope. It is something that you want to happen, but it may not happen – it probably won't happen. I wish that I looked like Brad Pitt, for example – actually, I do look a little like Brad Pitt! But you can wish for other things; you can wish for a million dollars or 10 million dollars, but that probably isn't going to happen.

When people express a wish, or say that they have a wish, we say that they are "making a wish." Sometimes people make wishes just by saying them, but in American culture there are also special times for making wishes, for thinking about things that you might want to have in your life. For example, if you see the



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first star in the night sky – you’re looking up at night into the sky and you see a star, we say that you can “make a wish on the star.” In fact, there was this famous song: “If you wish upon a star.” To wish upon a star, then, means to make a wish, to think about something that you want. Similarly, if you find a four-leaf “clover,” which is a small green plant that usually has three leaves but sometimes has four leaves, then you can make a wish on it. Notice that we use the preposition “on”: make a wish on a star, make a wish on the four-leaf clover. Other people make a wish, more commonly, when they blow out the candles on their birthday cake. Sometimes people make a wish when they throw a small coin into a fountain. Of course, these wishes usually don’t come true, but sometimes they do.

The Make-a-Wish Foundation, then, actually tries to make people’s wishes come true. It’s a wish-granting organization. To “grant” means to give something to someone without charging them, for free. The Make-a-Wish Foundation tries to grant wishes, that is, to make the wishes come true. Their specific purpose is to make wishes come true for children who have life-threatening medical conditions. A “life-threatening medical condition” is a disease or another health problem that the child may die from. Before children with life-threatening medical conditions die, then, the Make-a-Wish Foundation wants to make sure that at least one of their wishes comes true.

The idea for creating the Make-a-Wish Foundation started back in 1980. There was a seven-year-old boy named Christopher who wanted to be a police officer (a policeman) when he grew up. Children use the phrase “to be something when they grow up” to talk about what they want to do when they are adults, what they want to do when they get older. When I was a child, for example, I wanted to be a podcaster when I grew up, and here I am doing podcasts! Anyway, Christopher wanted to be a police officer when he grew up, but he had a life-threatening medical condition. He had leukemia, which is a type of cancer, and he knew he would probably never grow up.

Obviously, Christopher was too young to be a real police officer, but he probably wasn’t going to live long enough to become what he wanted. One of his mother’s friends was a police officer, and he promised to take Christopher for a ride in a police helicopter. A “helicopter” is something that flies through the air; it goes straight up and straight down. Usually it’s used for short distances and for a smaller number of people. Christopher got to tour the city in a helicopter that flew him from the police “headquarters,” or main office. When he got to the headquarters, there was a small ceremony and Christopher became the first honorary patrolman, or policeman, in the state where he lived, in Arizona. We



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use the word “honorary” when we give titles to people who haven’t really earned the title; they haven’t done the work to get that title. For example, universities sometimes give an honorary degree to a famous writer or a famous actor. The university is recognizing the hard work that the person has done and they give them this honorary degree as if he or she had graduated from the university, even though that didn’t really happen. This typically happens at the end of the school year during the final ceremony called “commencement.”

Christopher, then, became the first honorary police officer in Arizona, and a few days later he was given a small police uniform that was made especially for him. The “uniform” is the special clothing that you wear for a job, in this case, a police officer. I don’t think they gave him a gun, however! These things made Christopher very happy even though he was very sick. In fact, just two days later, Christopher died. But his mother and friends knew how happy he had been when his wish came true. It had made him forget for a moment about the pain that he was suffering.

So Christopher’s mother and friends wanted to be able to make other children’s wishes come true, so they created the Make-a-Wish Foundation. Since that time, the Foundation has reached more than 161,000 children around the world. The Make-a-Wish Foundation brings a lot of happiness into their lives, and it continues to this day. You will often hear about someone who donates money or participates in the Make-a-Wish Foundation: often celebrities (famous people), but also normal working people who believe that this is a good cause – this is a good organization.

In this episode, we will now continue our series on American cities, where we talk about different cities and parts of the United States, describe them for you. Today we’re going to talk about the Florida Keys (Keys), which are what’s called an archipelago in the state of Florida. An “archipelago” (archipelago) is a group of “islands,” or small areas of land surrounded by water, like the ones found, for example, in Japan or Indonesia. The archipelago called the Florida Keys has more than 1,700 islands.

The Florida Keys are located in the southeast part of the United States; Florida is in the southeast part. It is the state closest to the country of Cuba. It is surrounded by water: on the west you have the Gulf of Mexico, on the east coast you have the Atlantic Ocean. The Florida Keys have a very warm, what we would call tropical “climate” or weather. The Keys have many plants and animal “species,” or different types of plants and animals that are not found anywhere else in the United States. There are also many hurricanes that go through the



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Keys. A “hurricane” is a large, powerful storm with a lot of wind that begins over the sea and then moves over the land. Every year, hurricanes destroy or ruin a lot of buildings in the Florida Keys, but people still like to live there and to visit the area.

In fact, hundreds of thousands of visitors (of tourists) visit the Keys each year. Many of them are interested in “ecotourism,” or a type of tourism (a type of traveling) where people go to learn about the natural environment of a place. Other tourists go to the Keys because they want to relax on a beach or go scuba diving. “Scuba” (scuba) diving is where you put on an oxygen tank and a “mask,” a part that goes over your face, so you can breathe while you are underwater. Scuba divers swim underwater to look at the beautiful plants and animals that live there. I had an opportunity once to go scuba diving when I was visiting the island of Guam in the Pacific Ocean, but I didn’t go. I don’t swim very well, so I decided I would just stay in the hotel and have a Margarita!

The most famous part of the Florida Keys is an island and a city called Key West. Many “cruise ships,” which are very large boats that people travel on for vacation, visit the city of Key West. The city has lots of hotels and restaurants for tourists.

Interestingly, Key West is closer to the capital of Cuba, Havana, than it is to Miami, which is the largest city in south Florida. Because of this, many Cubans and Cuban Americans live in Key West. Some of them live there “legally,” or according to the law they’re here with permission; others come to Key West “illegally,” or against the law. This has become a problem, so that in the early 1980s, the United States started to stop cars that came in and out of Key West. There’s a bridge that connects many of the islands. It did so so that police could search the cars for people who weren’t supposed to be there.

Now the people who live in Key West didn’t like this at all. They said that it was bad for the tourism industry. To “protest” this action, or to show that they were unhappy with what the United States government was doing, in 1982 Key West began to call itself the Conch Republic (or the Conch Republic – either pronunciation is possible). A “conch” (or conch) is a type of “seashell,” or the hard, protective shape that protects some sea animals. Key West said that it was no longer part of the United States and instead was this new Conch (or Conch) Republic. Now, Key West never actually really stopped being part of the United States, but some people still like to call it the Conch (or Conch) Republic. Many tourists, in fact, buy t-shirts, flags, and other things with this written on it.



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The city of Key West is the “southernmost point” in the United States, that is, it is the farthest to the south in the U.S. They have a “monument,” or a small physical object that you can go and have your picture taken by that shows that it is the southernmost point in the U.S.

I have never been to the Keys or to Key West myself. I’ve been to Miami, many years ago, maybe, oh, 20 years ago at least. I was there in August, and southern Florida is very hot and very “humid,” there’s a lot of water in the air. It’s very humid and hot in Miami, especially in August, so I don’t really recommend going during the summertime. But Florida is a beautiful place during the fall and the spring.

Now let’s answer some of the questions that you’ve sent us.

Our first question comes from Gulls (Gulls) in Belgium. Gulls wants to know the meanings of the words “must,” “ought to,” and “need to.” When do we use each of these?

“Must” means the same as have to. It’s a word used to show that something is required or very important. “You must follow the directions for taking your medicine” – you have to do it, it’s required.

“Need to” also means have to. It’s used to show that something is necessary: “I need to lose weight because I’m becoming too fat.” That was just an example – not really true!

“Ought to” means the same as should. It’s a word used to show that something is a good idea or that it has some advantage, but it’s not necessary – it’s not necessarily required. For example: “You ought to go see that movie, it’s very good.” It’s not required you go; you don’t have to go, but you “ought to,” you should, it’s a good idea.

You can use “must,” “need to,” or “ought to” to give advice to someone; all three are possible. “Ought to” and “should” are used specifically for making suggestions to someone. I think “ought to” is probably used more in conversation than in writing. “Should” is, however, more common in general, both in writing and in conversation. “Must” is probably more common in writing than conversation. In conversation, we would probably say “need to”: “You need to go to the doctor.”



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Judicael (Judicael) from Benin in West Africa wants to know the meaning of the expression “nuts and bolts” (bolts).

“Nuts and bolts,” when used as an expression in conversation, refers to the basic practical details of something. Not the theoretical information, but the real, concrete information. A “bolt,” literally, is something you use to fasten (or put together) different things. It’s usually made of metal. A “nut” is a round circle that – of course, all circles are round, right? It’s a round circle that you use to tighten the bolt to make the two things stay together.

So, “nuts and bolts” has these other meanings English. But when we use them together, when you say “I want to know the nuts and bolts of how you make your podcast,” that means you want to know the specifics: what kind of computer I use, how I record it, how I use the microphone, etc.

Finally, Myung-joong (Myung-joong) in South Korea wants to know the meaning of the verb “to buy” in the following phrase: “Good luck getting anyone to buy that anymore,” or “to buy that idea anymore.”

Here, the verb “to buy,” which normally means to give someone money for something in return, means to believe that something is true. “Good luck” is a phrase we use when we are wishing someone, who has a difficult task ahead of them, success. You could say “Good luck getting anyone to buy your story about what happened last night with that girl.” This would mean it is going to be difficult for you to find anyone to believe that story. Sometimes people will just say, “I’m not buying it” – I’m not buying that story. Or, “I’m not buying that excuse.” They mean they don’t believe it; they don’t think it’s true.

There are other phrases we also use when we don’t believe something or we find it difficult to believe something. You can also say “it’s hard to swallow,” meaning it’s difficult to accept that, or it’s difficult to believe that.

Now, the opposite when you get someone to believe something completely even though it may not be true, we use the expression “hook, line, and sinker.” “We believed Jim’s story hook, line, and sinker. But later, we discovered that it wasn’t true.” “Hook,” “line,” and “sinker” all refer to things you would use when you go fishing for fish in a lake, river, or ocean. The fish is so hungry that it swallows the “hook,” which is a metal piece used for catching the fish. It also swallows the “line,” which connects that metal piece up to a fishing pole. The “sinker” is a weight that makes the hook go down into the water. But the expression “to fall



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for something hook, line, and sinker” means to believe something completely even though it probably isn’t true.

If you have a question or comment for the Café, you ought to email us. Our email address is eslpod@eslpod.com. We don’t have time for all of your questions, but we’ll do the best we can.

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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