



ESL Podcast 45 – A Camping Trip

GLOSSARY

camping – the act of sleeping and surviving outside; the act of taking shelter outside

* The family went camping in the mountains for three nights.

hiking – the act of walking through forests, on mountains, or through other natural areas

* Gertrude enjoyed nature walks so she decided to go hiking on a nearby mountain path.

outdoors – outside; areas of nature; natural locations or areas where people do not live or work

* Chuck wanted to avoid busy crowds of people for a while, so he spent his vacation outdoors observing wildlife.

to feel cooped up – to feel trapped; to feel confined inside of a space

* After staying inside the house for four full days, Herminia began to feel cooped up and needed to get out.

smog – air pollution; an unhealthy heavy combination of fog and smoke in the air

* The smog was so thick that it caused people in the city to cough and have difficulty breathing.

sporting goods store – a store that sells supplies needed to play sports to exercise

* Lawrence went to the sporting goods store to get a few things he needed to play for a local soccer team.

gear – tools, supplies and/or clothing needed for a certain activity

* Sherise had a compass, a map, a warm jacket, and all the other gear she needed to go for a long walk in the woods.

tent – a temporary shelter used for protection when sleeping or holding an event outside

* If it rains, the outdoor wedding will take place under a tent.

sleeping bag – a long, soft padded bag that one sleeps in on the floor, usually used while camping

* Roseanne's grandparents did not have any extra beds in their home, so Roseanne always slept in a sleeping bag in the living room when she visited.



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waterproof – able to block water from getting through; able to keep water and rain from entering and causing something to get wet

* The camera is waterproof and even works underwater.

hiking boots – special shoes with high sides that cover the heel and lower leg worn for walking on rocky or difficult ground

* That's a rocky trail and I wouldn't try hiking on it without wearing hiking boots.

psyched – excited; eager and looking forward to an event

* The children were really psyched about their trip to the amusement park and could not stop talking about how excited they were.

camper – a large truck that people can temporarily sleep and live in

* The Ballard family drove to the campsite in a camper, which they also used to sleep in instead of sleeping outdoors.

SUV – sport utility vehicle; a large vehicle that can be driven both on the road and on rougher ground

* On long trips, we like to drive the SUV instead of our small economy car so that we have more room and feel more comfortable.

backpack – a large bag worn on the back which holds various supplies and tools

* Clementine put her map and a bottle of water in the backpack before she started on her walk into the woods.

sunscreen – a lotion used to prevent sunburn; a cream applied to the skin that prevents the skin from getting damaged by the sun

* Joey forgot to use sunscreen, and as a result, got a very painful sunburn.



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CULTURE NOTE

Closing Rest Areas

A “rest area” (also called a rest stop or service area) is an area next to a freeway or highway that has, at the very least, restrooms and drinking fountains. Some rest areas are a little more “elaborate” (fancy; with more things), with such things as “grassy” (with grass) areas around the buildings where children can play, “picnic tables” (long tables with benches attached used for outdoor eating), and “vending machines” (machines you put money into to buy snack food or drinks). These basic rest areas are a public service maintained by the government. During poor economic times, however, many states have in the past temporarily closing many of their rest areas to save money.

That’s not to say that there is no place to stop on a long drive to use the restroom. While many rest areas are maintained by the government, many other service areas are formed by a collection of privately owned businesses “catering to” (designed for) travelers. These service areas include restaurants, gas stations, and even hotels or motels.

Rest areas should not be confused with “truck stops,” which are areas near freeways designed specifically for “truckers,” men and women who drive large trucks to transport goods from one place to another. These truck stops have restaurants and restrooms, but they also have gas stations with “diesel fuel,” the type of gasoline that most large trucks use, and specially designed fueling “bays” (areas) for large trucks.

In many movies, the truck stop is “depicted” (shown) as a “seedy” (not very nice; shabby) place where “small-time” (minor) criminals and “prostitutes” (men or women who sell sex for money) gather. While no doubt some truck stops are better than others, this is not an “accurate” (correct) picture of current truck stops, which are “for the most part” (generally) relatively modern, clean, and safe areas.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 45 – A Camping Trip.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 45. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

In this episode, we're going to discuss taking a camping trip. Let's get started.

[start of story]

My friends and I decided to take a trip to Yosemite National Park to do some camping and hiking. We all like the outdoors, but we all live in the city. We have all been griping about feeling cooped up, so we decided to take a road trip. This trip would give all of us a break from the traffic, noise, and smog that we all deal with in L.A.

Before we left, I went to the sporting goods store to get some new gear and equipment. I had a tent, but I needed a new sleeping bag, one that was waterproof. I also needed some new hiking boots. Lucky for me, I found everything in one stop, and by the time I left the store, I was really psyched about the trip.

Early on Saturday morning, my friend Rachel came to pick me up. None of us had a camper, but Rachel had an SUV that fit all of us comfortably. I was the last one to be picked up, and I put my backpack and other gear in the trunk. I was about to get into the car when I realized I had left my sunscreen in the house. I rushed back in and grabbed it, and then we were off. I couldn't wait to get some fresh air and plenty of exercise. Yosemite, here we come!

[end of story]

Lucy described in this story a trip that she and her friends took to Yosemite National Park. A "national park" in the United States is a park that is run by or operated by the federal or national government. There are many national parks in the United States, as there are in other countries. "Yosemite" is a national park here in California, in northern California. I myself have never been to Yosemite National Park, unfortunately. I hear it's very beautiful.



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Lucy and her friends were going to Yosemite in our story to do some camping and some hiking. “To camp” (camp) means to have a tent and to sleep on the ground underneath the tent – at least, that’s one way of camping. A “tent” (tent) is something made out of, usually, cloth with some poles, and you put the poles – the metal poles, or the plastic poles – into the ground, and you put the material – the cloth material – over it. That gives you some protection from the rain, for example. “To hike” (hike) means to walk in an area usually outside – that is, in a park environment. “To go hiking” usually means to go out away from the city, or at least away from the main part of the city, into a park.

Lucy and her friends “all like the outdoors.” When we talk about the “outdoors” (outdoors) – one word – we’re talking about anywhere that is not inside a building or inside a house. As a noun, there is always an “s” at the end. We talk about the “outdoors,” not the “outdoor.” You could use “outdoor” without the “s” as an adjective. You can talk about an “outdoor barbecue,” a barbecue – a place where you cook food – that is outside of your house. Although you can talk about the outdoors without talking about going to a park or a lake or river, usually when people use that term they are talking about exactly those kinds of places: a park, a river, and so forth.

Lucy says that she and her friends “have all been griping about feeling cooped up.” So, they “decided to take a road trip.” “To gripe” (gripe) means to complain, to complain very loudly. “To feel cooped (cooped) up” means to feel like you’re inside of a cage. We have on a farm something called a “chicken coop.” That’s the cage where you keep the chickens. “To feel cooped up,” then, means to feel like you are being trapped, like you can’t go out and do things.

Lucy and her friends were “feeling cooped up,” so they decided to go out on this trip, what she calls a “road trip.” The term “road trip” means that you take a car to get to the place where you’re going. You can’t take an airplane or a train. A “road trip” is always involving an automobile.

Lucy says her friends wanted “a break from the traffic, noise, and smog” that they deal with in L.A. When you want a “break” (break) from something, you mean you want to be separated from it. You want time when you’re not near it or part of it. It’s sort of like having a vacation from something. “I need a break from my work.” “I need a break from watching this movie.” I need to get up and do something different. The word “break” as a noun can mean a time of rest in between, typically, times of work or some other activity. A “break from” means you want to get away from something.



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Lucy and her friends want to get away from “the traffic, noise, and smog.” “Traffic” refers to having a lot of cars on the road – too many cars, so that you have to drive very slowly. “Noise” is a word you probably know. If you don’t, you can come to my house and listen to the children of my neighbor. “Smog” (smog) is a combination of the words “smoke” and “fog.” Really it means pollution. Here in Los Angeles, unfortunately, like in many large cities, there is often smog during the week – pollution caused by cars and factories and other things that cause pollution. Dogs, I suppose. Well, okay, maybe not dogs.

In any case, there’s a lot of pollution in a city like Los Angeles. Lucy’s friends have to deal with this pollution. “To deal with” something means to handle, to manage something. “I have to deal with the problem” means I have to take care of this problem. I have to handle this problem. Lucy continues by saying, “Before we left, I went to the sporting goods store to get some new gear and equipment.” A “sporting goods store” is a store that sells things that you would use for sports or possibly for going outside to the outdoors and doing something like camping.

“Gear” (gear) is a general term to mean the equipment that you use to do a certain activity. We could talk about the recording gear in a recording studio. That would be the equipment – the microphones, the computers, and so forth that are used to do the recording. The word “gear” is used in a lot of different circumstances. Here, it’s used in talking about the equipment or things that you would need to go camping. You’re going to need a tent to go camping. You’re also probably going to want a sleeping bag.

A “sleeping bag” is a large cloth bag that you wrap around your body, and then you zip it up. You close it. It’s to help you keep warm and dry when you are sleeping out in the tent when you go camping. Lucy says she wants her sleeping bag to be “waterproof.” The word “waterproof” means that it won’t get wet, or if it gets wet, the inside of the sleeping bag won’t get wet so you don’t get wet. Lucy also said that she “needed some new hiking boots.” “Boots” are special shoes that you wear to do things like hiking.

She then says, “Lucky for me, I found everything in one stop, and by the time I left the store, I was really psyched about the trip.” Lucy found everything “in one stop” – that is, in one place. She was “psyched” (psyched) about the trip. “To be psyched about” something is an informal term that has become popular in the last 20 years or so to mean to be excited about something, to be ready to do something, to be looking forward to doing something. It is, as I say, a very informal expression, but very common.



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She says that early on Saturday morning, her friend Rachel came to pick her up – to drive her to where she wanted to go. She said, “None of us had a camper.” A “camper” would be an actual vehicle like a car or truck – a big truck, you could think of it as – in which you could sleep. This would be the only way I would ever go camping. Real campers don't have campers. They sleep in tents outside on the ground where it's very uncomfortable. Lucy's friend had an SUV that they took to go camping. An “SUV” is a “sport utility vehicle.” It's basically a very large car. It's sort of between a car and a truck.

Lucy said that she put her “backpack and other gear in the trunk.” A “backpack” is a bag that you will see people wearing on their back to carry things like their books. This is very common in American universities and colleges. Almost every student has a backpack. Students from other countries sometimes think this is strange, because they think about backpacks as being for young children in elementary school. But here in the United States, college students very commonly wear backpacks. The “trunk” of a car is the back part of the car, at least an American car, where you put your gear: your luggage, your bags, and so forth.

Lucy realized that she had left her sunscreen in the house. “Sunscreen” (sunscreen) is basically a kind of lotion, a kind of liquid that you put on your skin so that your skin doesn't burn in the sun. This is something I have to put on anytime I go out in the sun, because I get sunburned very easily. Lucy went back. She says she “rushed back.” She went quickly into her house and grabbed the sunscreen. “To grab” here means simply to pick it up. Then she says, “We were off.” When we say “we are off,” we mean we are on our way. We have begun our journey. We have begun our trip.

Lucy ends by saying, “I couldn't wait to get some fresh air and plenty of exercise. Yosemite, here we come!” Lucy wants “to get some fresh air.” That's a way of saying you want to get away from the pollution and the smog. You want to get away from being in a house or a building all the time and breathe in good air, fresh air. That's what Lucy wants on her camping trip.

She ends by saying, “Yosemite, here we come!” We sometimes use that expression “here we come” when we are going on a trip. If you're going to take a trip to New York City, when you get to the airport, you might say, “New York City, here we come.” We are on the way. We are traveling there. There is an old song called “California, Here I Come,” meaning I'm on my way to California.

“California, here I come, right back where I started from.”



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Well, I won't sing the song now. Instead, let's listen to our story, this time at a normal speed.

[start of story]

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[end of story]

Thanks to our remarkable scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for all of her hard work, and thanks to you for listening.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Come back and listen to us again here on ESL Podcast.

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