



ESL Podcast 48 – Getting a Haircut

GLOSSARY

hairstylist – a professional who cuts, colors, styles, and perform other tasks on hair for people

* Ami went to the hairstylist to have her hair cut and dyed a different color.

bangs – fringe; a short section of hair that hangs over the front of one's face, usually stopping above the eyes

* Glenda's bangs were so long that they were hanging over her eyes.

split end – the damaged end or tip of a piece of hair, which is divided into two pieces

* Split ends had developed because the hair had gotten so weak that it was breaking apart.

roots – the section of hair directly next to the head; the point at which hair grows out of the head

* Wade's hair was strong at the roots, but it got weaker as it grew longer.

to show – to be visible; to be able to be seen by other people

* Regina's natural shade of brown was showing, even though the rest of her hair had been dyed blonde.

receptionist – someone who answers phone calls and greets customers at a business

* The receptionist was busy on the phone, so Edgar had to wait for her to finish before he could talk to her.

to finish up – to be near the end of a task; to almost be done with a task but not done yet

* Robby still needed to finish up his homework, but his mother said he could play outside afterwards.

client – customer; a person who pays someone else for a service

* The client met with a money manager to help her earn more money on her savings.

station – an area where one person works; a spot inside a hair salon where only one person works

* Tara looked around the salon and saw other people getting their hair cut at other stations.



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to fit (someone) in – to make time for someone; to use some of one's time to see or do something for someone else

* Mr. Sanchez had a busy schedule, but he still had enough time to fit in his best customer.

trim – a haircut that removes a small amount of hair without changing the style

* Meredith liked the way her hairstyle looked, so she only wanted a simple trim to make it look shorter.

shoulder length – when hair stops on or just above one's shoulders

* Miss Pasek never let her hair grow past shoulder length because she did not like having long hair.

to take (something) up – to make shorter; to remove length

* Debbie wanted the bottom hem of her dress to be shorter, so she took it up an extra two inches.

face shape – the form or shape created by the outline of one's face

* George had a round face shape but his brother's face looked more like a square.

tip – extra money paid to someone for a paid service, usually to show one's appreciation

* Luke gave the waitress a tip after she was done serving him at the restaurant.

to do wonders with – to make something look very good; to create something great from something that is difficult to work with

* The baker could do wonders with icing and decorated cakes in usual ways.



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CULTURE NOTE

How Americans Spend Their Time

A 2010 article in the *Wall Street Journal* reported on a study about how Americans spend their time during the day. The results come from a “representative sample” (small number of people chosen randomly, but who represent the general population) of Americans age 15 or older. This means that there may not be a single American who actually spends his or her time exactly this way each day, since it is just an average for the group. Still, it gives you a “rough” (approximate; general) idea about the “relative” (considered in relation to something else) importance of different activities for the “typical” person living in the United States.

Here are some of the categories, from most time to least:

- Sleeping: 8 hours, 40 minutes
- Working or work-related activities: 3 hours, 32 minutes
- Watching television: 2 hours, 49 minutes
- Leisure (relaxing) and sports activities: 2 hours, 26 minutes
- Household activities (such as cleaning): 1 hour, 48 minutes
- Eating and drinking: 1 hour, 13 minutes
- Personal care (such as showering, getting dressed, putting on make-up): 47 minutes
- Buying things: 46 minutes
- Education: 28 minutes
- Caring for “household members” (people who live at your house, such as young children or babies): 32 minutes
- Organizational, “civic” (community), and religious activities: 20 minutes
- Caring for non-household members (such as elderly parents): 13 minutes
- Telephone calls, mail, and email: 12 minutes

Some of these times are almost certainly “averaged out across” (dividing into the different parts of) the week. For example, if you spend 2 hours and 20 minutes volunteering for a religious organization or community group, that would average out to 20 minutes a day, even if you did all of your volunteering on a single day.



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 48 – Getting a Haircut.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 48. 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 going to get a haircut. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

I have an appointment with my hairdresser today. It has been too long since I had my hair cut. My bangs were too long. I had split ends and my roots were showing. I was a mess!

I arrived for my appointment, and I told the receptionist that I was there for an appointment with Mark. She told me that he was finishing up with another client and that he would be with me soon. About 10 minutes later, he came over to where I was sitting and took me back to his station.

Mark: Hi, how have you been? You're looking good.

Lucy: Thanks. I've been great. Thanks for fitting me in today.

Mark: No problem. So, tell me, what do you want to have done today?

Lucy: I need a trim.

Mark: Okay. Let's see, how short do you want me to cut it? Shoulder length? Chin length?

Lucy: I'd like to take it up about two inches in the back, and the bangs should fall just under my eyebrows.

Mark: Okay, I really think that's a good length for your face shape.

Just as I had hoped, Mark did a great job with my hair. I paid the receptionist and made sure I gave him a big tip. Anyone who can do wonders with my crazy hair definitely deserves it!



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[end of dialogue]

Our story begins with Lucy telling us that she has an appointment with her hairdresser today. A “hairdresser” (hairdresser) is a person who cuts and colors and does other things with your hair. “Hairdresser” is a somewhat older name. Nowadays, you will hear the term “stylist” (stylist) to describe what a hairdresser does.

There's also the term “barber” (barber). A “barber” is usually someone who cuts only men's hair. A “barber” isn't normally associated with the person who cuts a woman's hair. “Hairdresser” or “stylist” could be associated with either a man or a woman. Traditionally, it was associated only with women. My mother used to go to a “hairdresser” every . . . I don't know, two weeks, a month, I don't remember – to get her hair done: to cut it, to perhaps do something with the color, to do whatever hairdressers do with women's hair.

Lucy says, “It has been too long since I had my hair cut. My bangs were too long.” Your “bangs” (bangs) are the hairs that hang in the front of your head over your forehead, usually stopping before your eyes. If your bangs don't stop before your eyes then you, of course, can't see. Lucy says her bangs were too long. She says, “I had split ends and my roots were showing. I was a mess!” “Split ends” (ends) is a situation where the ends of your hair are damaged and they divide into two separate pieces when they should just be one piece. This is something, again, I think women worry about more than men, but apparently it doesn't make your hair look very good when you have split ends.

Lucy says she has split ends. “And,” she says, “my roots were showing.” “Roots” (roots) here refers to the part of your hair that is right next to your head, right next to your scalp, which is the top of your head. It's the point at which the hair grows out of your head. If you dye your hair – if you color your hair, as many women do, and some men who don't want people to see their gray hair – you will eventually see that the original color of your hair will begin to show because, of course, the hair grows and new hair that grows out of your head won't be the color of the hair that had been dyed or colored. That's the problem that Lucy is having.

Lucy told the receptionist that she was “there for an appointment with Mark.” The “receptionist” would be the person who works at the front of the “salon” (salon), which is a place where hairdressers work. The “receptionist” is the person who makes appointments for customers and usually takes their money at the end of the haircut. The receptionist was told by Lucy that she was there for an appointment with Mark.



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The receptionist told Lucy he was “finishing up with another client” and that he would be with her soon. “To finish up” is a phrasal verb meaning to be at the end of some task that you’re performing – to be almost done, but not quite done. “I’m just finishing up my project.” I’m just completing it. I’m not finished with it. It’s not complete, but it is almost complete. That’s the idea of “to finish up.”

Mark is finishing up with another client. The word “client” (client) here just means a customer, usually a customer who pays for some service – something that is done to them or for them. A “customer” is a more general term that would be used, for example, if you were going in to buy something like a car or a cup of coffee. That would be a case where we would use “customer.”

Lucy continues the story. She says, “About 10 minutes later, he came over to where I was sitting and took me back to his station.” So, Mark walked over to where Lucy was sitting and took her to his station. “Station” here refers to an area where someone works inside of a hair salon, inside of what we used to call, at least for women, a “beauty parlor” (parlor). But they don’t call them “beauty parlors” anymore. Now they’re called “salons,” which I guess sounds better.

Mark says to Lucy, “Hi, how have you been? You’re looking good.” Lucy says, “Thanks! I’ve been great. Thanks for fitting me in today.” “To fit someone in” is a phrasal verb that means to make time for someone. If you have a busy schedule and someone wants to have an appointment with you, you may decide to fit them in. “I have a little time between my nine o’clock appointment and my ten o’clock appointment. I’ll fit you in at 9:45.” Mark is being thanked by Lucy for fitting her into his schedule today to have her hair cut.

Mark says, “No problem,” meaning it’s not a problem. “So, tell me, what do you want to have done today?” Lucy says, “I need a trim.” A “trim” (trim) is a haircut that removes a small amount of hair from the bottom of your hair, if you will, without changing the actual style of the hair. When you trim your hair, you’re not cutting off very much hair. You’re just cutting off a little bit to make it look better. Mark says, “Okay. Let’s see, how short do you want me to cut it? Shoulder length? Chin length?” Mark is asking Lucy how much hair he should cut.

Lucy is being asked if she wants it shoulder length or chin length. “Shoulder length” means that your hair would go down and stop at your shoulder. Again, this is something we would normally talk about for a woman getting her hair cut, although, of course, there are men now who have hair down to their shoulders. My brother had hair down to his shoulders, but that was back in the 1970s. I guess it was more common then. Mark also gives Lucy the option of “chin



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length.” Your “chin” (chin) is the bottom of your face, basically. It's where your jaw is, right below your mouth, or the bottom of your mouth.

Lucy says, “I'd like to take it up about two inches in the back, and the bangs should fall just under my eyebrows.” “To take something up,” when we're talking about haircuts, means to make it shorter, to remove the length. We also use this phrasal verb in talking about a pair of pants that need to be shortened or a skirt that needs to be shortened. You can take it up a few inches. That expression is used with hair to describe how much should be cut from the hair. “To take something up” can also mean to start an activity. “I'm going to take up playing the violin.” I'm going to start this new hobby, this new activity. In this case, however, it just means to shorten.

Lucy wants her bangs to fall just under her eyebrows. Her “eyebrows” are, of course, the little strips of hair that are above her eyes. She wants her bangs to stop at her eyebrows. Mark says, “Okay. I really think that's a good length for your face shape” – for the form or shape of your face. Of course, Mark has to say that because he's getting paid by Lucy. Lucy ends the story by saying, “Just as I had hoped” – just as I had wanted – “Mark did a great job with my hair.”

Lucy says, “I paid the receptionist and made sure I gave him a big tip.” A “tip” (tip) is extra money you give someone who's done a good job, who's given you good service. It's very common to tip your hairstylists or hairdresser or barber. She says, “Anyone who can do wonders with my crazy hair definitely deserves it.” She's saying that Mark deserves extra money. He deserves a tip because he's done such a great job with her crazy hair. “Crazy” here doesn't mean mentally insane. “Crazy” just means difficult to control or difficult to work with.

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

[start of dialogue]

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Mark: Hi, how have you been? You're looking good.



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[end of dialogue]

Thanks to our wonderful script writer, Dr. Lucy Tse, for all of her wonderful work, and thanks to you for listening.

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

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