

## Lesson 05: A Diet Dilemma

---

*Nathan gives his friend Matt advice on losing weight. First, listen to their conversation and answer these comprehension questions. Then learn the expressions in the dialogue.*

### **Listening Comprehension**

- 1. Matt needs to lose weight in order to...**
  - a. become healthier
  - b. impress a girl
  - c. participate in a sports competition
- 2. How much weight does he need to lose?**
  - a. four pounds
  - b. five pounds
  - c. ten pounds
- 3. He's eating too much because...**
  - a. a member of his family is cooking a lot
  - b. he's stressed about school
  - c. he can't cook, so he just eats fast food
- 4. One person causing problems for Matt is his...**
  - a. aunt
  - b. coach
  - c. girlfriend
- 5. Nathan suggests...**
  - a. becoming a vegetarian
  - b. eating healthier meals
  - c. taking cooking classes
- 6. Where do they go at the end of the conversation?**
  - a. the gym
  - b. the library
  - c. the supermarket

## Conversation Text

**Matt:** Oh man, I can't believe this. **What a drag.**

**Nathan:** **What's with you?**

**Matt:** Coach Davis just put me on a diet. He said I'm four pounds over my weight class. If I don't **shed** four pounds I won't be able to wrestle in the State Tournament.

**Nathan:** So **what's the big deal?** **Lay off** the potato chips, jog a few miles, and drop the pounds. It's not like you have to lose fifty pounds or anything. Four pounds shouldn't be too hard.

**Matt:** **You don't get it.** My Aunt Mae is in town. And man oh man... she's been **cooking up a storm** and if you refuse to eat, she cries.

**Nathan:** Yeah, I remember your Aunt Mae. Didn't she just get divorced or something?

**Matt:** Yeah, and now she's using food to **fill the void**. Unfortunately, she's making everyone else eat with her. Last night Aunt Mae made me eat three pieces of pecan pie. If I continue at this rate I'll be as fat as a **blimp** in no time.

**Nathan:** I guess you do have a problem. Of course you don't want to hurt your aunt's feelings. But you can't

### Vocabulary

**What a drag** = This is annoying

**What's with you?** = What's the problem you're having?

**shed four pounds** = lose four pounds

**What's the big deal?** = This isn't such a big problem

**lay off the potato chips** = eat less of (or stop eating) the chips

**You don't get it** = You don't understand

**cooking up a storm** = cooking a LOT

**fill the void** = feel better after a loss

**blimp** = a type of large, round air vehicle

let her stop you from **making** the wrestling tournament. You're the best wrestler in your weight class.

**Matt:** I sure am. But if I don't get out of Aunt Mae's food **binge**, I'll be wrestling in the sumo weight class pretty soon.

**Nathan:** Seems to me like you're going to have to tell your Aunt Mae to **back off**, somehow. Just explain the situation to her. I'm sure she'll understand.

**Matt:** I'm not so sure. **She's really into** this cooking thing. And I hate to say it, but she's already pretty **plump** around the waist, too.

**Nathan:** Hey, I got an idea.

**Matt:** **Lemme** hear it, dude. I'll take anything at this point.

**Nathan:** Your Aunt Mae is into cooking to help her **cope with** her divorce. So if you can't beat her, join her.

**Matt:** But I'm trying to lose weight, not gain it.

**Nathan:** **Shut up** and listen. Just ask your Aunt Mae to start cooking healthy, fat free meals, stuff with low **carbs** and high in protein.

**Matt:** Well, that might work. But my Aunt Mae is really into pasta... and the sweets that follow. I don't even wanna know how many calories those slices of pecan pie had.

## Vocabulary

**making the wrestling tournament** = being able to participate in the tournament

**binge** = eating too much, an excessive amount

**back off** = stop being so aggressive

**She's really into** = she's very interested in / dedicated to

**plump** = fat

**Lemme** = let me

**cope with** = manage emotionally

**Shut up** = Stop talking. This is a rather rude way to say this, and it should only be used between two close friends who have a good relationship and can joke with each other.

**carbs** = carbohydrates

**Nathan:** But you can surely suggest different meals.

**Matt:** Well, I guess **it wouldn't hurt**.

**Nathan:** Look, Matt, the team needs you. So either you open your mouth at dinner time and suggest healthy meals... or else **say goodbye to** making the State Tournament.

**Matt:** I know, I know... maybe I can **check out** a healthy cookbook at the library and take it home with me?

**Nathan: Now you're talking.** I'm sure you'll find a way to drop four pounds without hurting your Aunt's feelings. Don't stress about it. Come on, I'll walk over to the library with you.

## Vocabulary

**it wouldn't hurt** = it wouldn't have any negative effect; it could be good to try

**say goodbye to** = accept the fact that this opportunity will not happen

**check out** = in this context, it means borrow a book from the library

**Now you're talking.** = Now you're saying the right thing; now you're having a good idea

## Vocabulary Quiz

*Complete each sentence with a word from the box. Two words are not used.*

<b>back off</b>	<b>fill the void</b>	<b>not really into</b>	<b>what a drag</b>
<b>cope with</b>	<b>it couldn't hurt</b>	<b>now you're talking</b>	<b>what's the big deal</b>
<b>doesn't get it</b>	<b>made</b>	<b>say goodbye to</b>	<b>what's with you</b>

1. A friend of mine \_\_\_\_\_ it to the final round of a popular game show - but she was eliminated before winning any prizes.
2. He couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ the disappointment of not getting the promotion, so he ended up quitting.
3. If the government cuts funding for the arts, we'll have to \_\_\_\_\_ the possibility of a community theater.
4. Man, you've asked her out multiple times and she hasn't said yes - you should probably \_\_\_\_\_.
5. It's just a little get-together among friends, so \_\_\_\_\_ if we're a few minutes late?
6. I've tried to explain the computer program to him, but he's not very tech-savvy, so he just \_\_\_\_\_.
7. That's the fifth mistake you've made today. \_\_\_\_\_? Have you got something on your mind?
8. We enjoyed the Star Trek movie even though we're \_\_\_\_\_ science fiction.
9. You have to work overtime again? \_\_\_\_\_. That's the third time this week.
10. If you're going abroad for six months, \_\_\_\_\_ to get your international driver's license - you never know when you might need to drive.

## **Speaking Task**

This conversation describes a delicate situation; Matt needs to achieve his goal without offending his aunt by rejecting her homemade food.

Describe a time when you had to resolve something and there was the danger of hurting someone's feelings. How did you handle it?

Do you tend to be "blunt" (speaking very directly and honestly, regardless of how it might affect the other person) or are you very careful not to make anyone upset?

Record your answer at [www.speakpipe.com/espressoenglish](http://www.speakpipe.com/espressoenglish) or send your MP3 to [homework@espressoenglish.net](mailto:homework@espressoenglish.net) and I'll evaluate your spoken English!

## **Answers**

### **Comprehension Questions:**

1. c
2. a
3. a
4. a
5. b
6. b

### **Vocabulary Quiz:**

1. made
2. cope with
3. say goodbye to
4. back off
5. what's the big deal
6. doesn't get it
7. what's with you
8. not really into
9. what a drag
10. it couldn't hurt