



ESL Podcast 530 – Exterior Parts of a Car

GLOSSARY

pain in the neck – a person who is very annoying, making things more difficult or frustrating

* Your little brother is such a pain in the neck! Can't you get him to leave us alone?

hood – the large, flat piece of metal at the front of a car that opens to give access to the engine and other mechanical parts

* Is that smoke coming out from under the hood? What's wrong with your car?

taillight – one of the two red lights on the back of a car

* The policeman stopped her car to tell her that one of the taillights had burned out.

windshield – the large window in the front of a car; the window a driver looks through to see where the car is going

* It was raining so hard we could hardly see through the windshield.

side mirror – one of the two mirrors on each side of the car that let the driver see what is behind the car

* Look in your side mirror before you change lanes!

headlight – one of the two lights on the front of the car that let the driver see where the car is going at night

* Please turn on your headlights. It isn't safe to drive if you can't see where you're going.

tire – the thick piece of rubber that is filled with air and goes around the wheel of a car or bicycle

* Do you think we need to put more air in the bicycle tires?

hubcap – the flat, circular piece of metal that covers the side of a tire, used for decoration

* When we bought our car, the dealer offered to sell us special hubcaps, but we decided to use the plain ones that were already on the car.

tailpipe – the round, metal tube located under the back of a car that hot gases come out of when a car is turned on

* It is very dangerous to breathe the air that comes out of a car's tailpipe.



ESL Podcast 530 – Exterior Parts of a Car

to get lost – to go away and leave someone alone; to leave a place and/or a person

* You've been following me around all day. Get lost! I have things to do!

to look over (one's) shoulder – to closely observe what another person is doing, especially when that person doesn't want to be watched

* Samuel says he could do his work a lot more quickly if his boss weren't always looking over his shoulder, making him feel self-conscious.

roof rack – the pieces of metal or plastic that are attached to the top of one's car, used to hold skis, bicycles, suitcases, boxes, and other large things that need to be taken somewhere and would not otherwise fit inside the car

* How many bicycles can fit on your roof rack?

windshield wiper – one of two long pieces of metal, plastic and rubber that move across the windshield to move rainwater so that the driver can see through the windshield

* It's really raining hard now! Can't you make the windshield wipers move any more quickly?

for sure – definitely; certainly; describing something that will happen without a doubt

* We're going to be at your wedding, for sure. We wouldn't miss it for anything.

graceful – attractive, moving smoothly, polite, and pleasant

* She's such a graceful ballerina!

to gloat – to brag; to talk about one's good luck or success, especially when other people are not as lucky or successful

* It's very rude of Tsiang to gloat about her new job when she knows that none of her friends have been able to find a job yet.

grill – the vertical or horizontal pieces of metal on the front of a car that protect the engine and radiator

* Please don't forget to wash all the dead bugs off the grill.



ESL Podcast 530 – Exterior Parts of a Car

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of these can help you see what's behind a car?
 - a) Windshield.
 - b) Side mirrors.
 - c) Headlights.

 2. Why does Marie call Ethan a "pain in the neck"?
 - a) Because he gave her a neck injury.
 - b) Because he is giving her a headache.
 - c) Because he's being annoying.
-

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

hood

The word "hood," in this podcast, means the large, flat piece of metal at the front of a car that opens to give access to the engine and other mechanical parts: "Do you know how to open the hood and check the oil level in your car?" A "hood" is also a piece of fabric sewn to the neck of one's shirt or jacket that can be lifted up and over one's head, usually to protect one's hair and head from the rain: "I forgot to bring an umbrella, so I had to use my hood when it started raining." Finally, some people use the word "hood" as an informal term for "neighborhood," especially if they are referring to a poor or undesirable area: "How long have you lived in the hood?"

grill

In this podcast, the word "grill" means the vertical or horizontal pieces of metal on the front of a car that protect the engine and radiator: "He fell asleep and drove into a tree, but the grill wasn't damaged very badly." A "grill" is also short for "barbeque grill," a large box kept outside that has a hot fire and a metal tray that food is placed on for cooking: "They bought a new grill so they could invite their friends over for a barbeque." As a verb, "to grill" means to cook food on a grill: "Are you going to grill the chicken breasts, or bake them?" Finally, the phrase "to grill (someone)" means to interrogate someone, or ask someone a lot of questions in an aggressive way: "The job interview was really difficult, and they grilled me for more than two hours!"



ESL Podcast 530 – Exterior Parts of a Car

CULTURE NOTE

Car owners can buy many different “accessories” (things that make something more attractive or functional, but are not necessary) for the “exterior” (outside) of their car.

“Rear spoilers” are pieces of metal, plastic, or fiberglass (a material made of glass fibers embedded in a “resin,” a special liquid that becomes solid as it dries) that sit above the “trunk” (a large box for carrying things in the back of a car) on the back end of the car. They make the car more “aerodynamic” (with a shape that makes it easy for air to move over and around something). Rear spoilers used to be just for racecars, but now they are used as a styling accessory for many “passenger cars” (cars that are used for carrying people, not for racing).

Some people buy “stainless steel” (a type of metal) or “chrome” (a silver-colored metal) “exhaust tips” that attach to the end of a tailpipe to make it more attractive and “shiny” (reflecting light). “Mud flaps” are rectangular pieces of “flexible” (able to move) plastic or rubber that hang behind the tires so that “mud” (wet earth and dirt) doesn’t fly up and make the car dirty.

A “bug deflector” or “hood protector” is a long piece of plastic that attaches to the front of the car and “prevents” (doesn’t allow) “bugs” (insects), small rocks, and other things from hitting the windshield. A “sunroof wind deflector” attaches to the top of the car in front of a “sunroof” (a window in the ceiling of a car) and prevents wind from going through the sunroof when it is open.

Finally, some people buy “LED taillights” that can be used to replace other lights on the car’s exterior, making them brighter or a different color.

Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – b; 2 – c



ESL Podcast 530 – Exterior Parts of a Car

COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 530: Exterior Parts of a Car.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 530. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Go to our website at eslpod.com. Check out our Learning Guides, our 8- to 10-page guides for our current episodes that help you improve your English even faster.

This episode is called "Exterior Parts of a Car." It's a dialogue between Ethan and Marie, and it will review a lot of basic vocabulary related to what you find on a car. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Ethan: You missed a spot.

Marie: Hold on. When we made our bet for the loser to wash the winner's car, it didn't include the other person being there and being a pain in the neck.

Ethan: I'm just here to make sure everything gets washed properly, from the hood to the taillights.

Marie: Don't you worry. See how carefully I'm washing the windshield, side mirrors, and headlights? I bet they've never been cleaner.

Ethan: When are you going to get to the tires and the hubcaps? And I think you forgot the tailpipe.

Marie: Will you get lost? I'll do a better job without you looking over my shoulder.

Ethan: I doubt that. If I weren't here, who would remind you to clean the roof rack and the windshield wipers? I bet you would have forgotten those, for sure.

Marie: I'm going to forget about this whole thing if you don't shut up.



ESL Podcast 530 – Exterior Parts of a Car

Ethan: Nah uh. That's not an option. When you lose a bet, you have to pay the price.

Marie: Well, I'm willing to be a graceful loser if you'll stop gloating.

Ethan: Not a chance! Don't forget the grills!

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with Ethan saying to Marie, "You missed a spot." A "spot" is a small area of something. In this case, Marie is washing Ethan's car, and Ethan is telling her that there is a part of the car that she didn't wash properly. We sometimes use this expression as a joke; when someone is washing their car or cleaning something, we may say, "Oh, you missed a spot," saying that they're not doing a very good job. Of course, it's probably not our business to be telling them, and certainly that's the way Marie feels about Ethan!

Marie says, "Hold on (meaning stop). When we made our bet for the loser to wash the winner's car, it didn't include the other person being there and being a pain in the neck." So Ethan and Marie had made some bet that Marie lost, and so Marie has to wash Ethan's car. But, she says, the bet (their agreement over something that if it happened one way would result in Marie winning, if it happened the other way, would result in Ethan winning) didn't include the other person being a pain in the neck. The expression "a pain in the neck" is a person who is very annoying, a person who makes things difficult or frustrating. My older brother is a pain in the neck. I won't say which older brother; since I have eight, they can guess which one it is!

Ethan says, "I'm just here to make sure everything gets washed properly (gets washed correctly), from the hood to the taillights." The "hood" is a large, flat piece of metal in the front of the car that, in an American car, covers the engine (the motor). So the hood is something that is in the front that lifts up like a door. The "taillights" are two red lights in the back of the car that indicate when you are going to stop. The lights turn on when you step on the brake, which slows down or stops your car.

Marie said, "Don't you worry (meaning don't worry). See how carefully I'm washing the windshield, side mirrors, and headlights? I bet they've never been cleaner." She's saying that she's washing the "windshield," which is the large window in the front of the car that you look out through; the "side mirrors," which are the two mirrors, one on each side of the car that allows you to see if someone is behind you or next to you; and the "headlights," which are the two



ESL Podcast 530 – Exterior Parts of a Car

lights on the front of the car that help you see at night. Marie says, “I bet they’ve never been cleaner,” meaning this is the cleanest that they have ever been because I am washing them, so Ethan shouldn’t complain. That’s what she’s saying here.

Ethan says, “When are you going to get to the tires and the hubcaps?” “When are you going to get to” here means when are you going to start working on the hubcaps and the tires. The “tire” is the thick piece of rubber that goes around the four wheels of your car. A “hubcap” is a flat, round piece of metal that covers the side of the tire; it’s used mostly for decoration. Some people like to buy very expensive, fancy hubcaps; some people, like me, don’t care. Then Ethan says, we think jokingly, “And I think you forgot the tailpipe.” The “tailpipe” is a long, round metal tube that comes out of the back of the car, where the hot gases from the engine go out. We don’t ever wash the tailpipe. No one ever sees it for the most part, so most people would never wash the tailpipe. We think, then, that Ethan here is just trying to make a joke.

Marie then says, “Will you get lost?” Normally, if you get lost you don’t know where you are. But if someone tells you to get lost, they’re saying they want you to go away, to leave that person alone. That’s to get lost. It’s a very informal, somewhat rude thing to say to someone. You would only say it to someone you knew very well, or someone that you didn’t know that you didn’t care you were being rude to. It’s not a nice thing to say. Marie says, “I’ll do a better job without you looking over my shoulder.” “To look over (someone’s) shoulder” means to observe very closely what the other person is doing, usually we use this expression when the other person (the person doing the task – doing the action) doesn’t want you watching them. So if you are, for example, fixing something, and someone comes and watches you to make sure you do it right, and you don’t want them there, you may say, “Stop looking over my shoulder!” That’s what Marie is asking Ethan to do.

Ethan says, “I doubt that (I doubt you would do a better job if I weren’t here, he means). If I weren’t here, who would remind you to clean the roof rack and the windshield wipers?” The “roof” (roof) is the top of the car. The “roof rack” is something that you put on the top of your car so that you can put, for example, suitcases, boxes, skis, things like that on top of your car without damaging your car. They’re long pieces of metal that protect the roof (the top of the car), and allow you to put things on top of them. Most cars still have roof racks, although because cars have gotten so much larger, I don’t see them being used as much. I guess people put things inside of their car instead. Ethan mentions the windshield wipers. We said the windshield is the window that you look through in the front of the car. The “wipers” are the things that go back and forth that clean



ESL Podcast 530 – Exterior Parts of a Car

the water off of the windshield. There are usually two of them in the front of the car, and they have little pieces of rubber on them that help you remove the water from your windshield when, for example, it's raining. Ethan says, "I bet you would have forgotten those, for sure." "For sure," here, means definitely, certainly.

Marie says, "I'm going to forget about this whole thing if you don't shut up." She's saying I am going to stop washing your car unless you be quiet. Ethan says, "Nah uh." This is a very informal way of saying no, something you might hear from a child. "Nah uh" means not at all, absolutely not. Ethan says, "That's not an option (you don't have that choice). When you lose a bet, you have to pay the price." Marie says, "Well, I'm willing to be a graceful loser if you'll stop gloating." Someone who is "graceful" is someone who is polite, pleasant, perhaps sophisticated. In this case, Marie means that she'll be a nice loser; she won't complain if Ethan stops gloating. "To gloat" (gloat) means to brag, to talk about your good luck or your success, especially around other people who are not successful. So if you take an exam in school and you get a very high score, and no one else got a high score, to gloat would mean to say, "Oh, what a great score I got! You got a low score? Oh, that's too bad." That would be to gloat. It's not a very good thing – nice thing to do.

Ethan, however, says, "Not a chance!" meaning there's no way that he's going to stop gloating. Finally he says, "Don't forget the grills!" The "grill" is a vertical or horizontal piece of metal in the front of the car that protects the engine and the radiator. So, in the very front of the car – in some cars anyway, there's a grill; it's sort of like a screen that allows air to go into where the engine is. Not all cars have grills. Ethan is reminding Marie that she should wash the grill as well. The word "grill," and the word "hood" that we used in this dialogue, have additional meanings. Please take a look at our Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

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

[start of dialogue]

Ethan: You missed a spot.

Marie: Hold on. When we made our bet for the loser to wash the winner's car, it didn't include the other person being there and being a pain in the neck.

Ethan: I'm just here to make sure everything gets washed properly, from the hood to the taillights.



ESL Podcast 530 – Exterior Parts of a Car

Marie: Don't you worry. See how carefully I'm washing the windshield, side mirrors, and headlights? I bet they've never been cleaner.

Ethan: When are you going to get to the tires and the hubcaps? And I think you forgot the tailpipe.

Marie: Will you get lost? I'll do a better job without you looking over my shoulder.

Ethan: I doubt that. If I weren't here, who would remind you to clean the roof rack and the windshield wipers? I bet you would have forgotten those, for sure.

Marie: I'm going to forget about this whole thing if you don't shut up.

Ethan: Nah uh. That's not an option. When you lose a bet, you have to pay the price.

Marie: Well, I'm willing to be a graceful loser if you'll stop gloating.

Ethan: Not a chance! Don't forget the grills!

[end of dialogue]

The script for this episode was written by the graceful Dr. Lucy Tse, who's never a pain in the neck!

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

English as a Second Language Podcast is written and produced by Dr. Lucy Tse, hosted by Dr. Jeff McQuillan, copyright 2009 by the Center for Educational Development.