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## ESL Podcast 1053 – Buying Food at the Concession Stand

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### GLOSSARY

**to grab** – to get or take something quickly

\* Jill woke up late and she didn't have time to eat breakfast, so she grabbed a banana as she left for work.

**to hit** – to go somewhere and get something quickly, especially to buy something

\* Should we hit the burger restaurant on the way to the movies?

**concession stand** – a kiosk (small building) that sells food and drinks, especially at a sporting event, concert, or movie theater

\* The city opened a concession stand next to the baseball field.

**popcorn** – a food made by popping kernels (seeds) of corn in very hot air or oil, usually served when mixed with melted butter and salt

\* Popcorn is a healthy snack if you eat it plain, without butter and salt.

**hot dog** – a food made by putting a low-quality, sausage-like, pink cylinder of meat between the two halves of a long bun (oval-shaped piece of bread)

\* Whenever they go camping, they cook hot dogs and marshmallows over a campfire.

**the works** – with all the availing toppings for a certain type of food

\* If you order a hamburger with the works, it comes with ketchup, mustard, cheese, lettuce, tomato, onions, pickles, and grilled mushrooms.

**nachos** – a Mexican food of tortilla chips that are covered with hot, melted cheese and possibly other items, such as ground beef, black beans, green onion, avocado, tomato, and more

\* Our deluxe nachos come with shredded pork, cilantro, two types of beans, and diced tomato, as well as our special salsa.

**pretzel** – a bread-like snack made by rolling the dough (uncooked bread) into a long tube and then folding into a distinct shape before sprinkling it with salt and baking it, either chewy and very large (the size of a large plate), or crunchy and small (the size of large coin)

\* She ordered a pretzel without salt, but with mustard for dipping.

**cotton candy** – a dessert made by spinning colored sugar very quickly, mixing it with air so that it looks like loose cotton, often sold at carnivals and fairs by wrapping it around a paper cone that is held while eating it with one's mouth

\* Do you want blue cotton candy, or pink?



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**snow cone** – a dessert made by shaving (cutting) ice into very small pieces, scooping it into a paper cone, and covering it with one or more colored, flavored syrups (thick, sweet sauce), often sold at carnivals and fairs

\* Hurry up and eat that snow cone before it melts, or you'll have raspberry syrup all over your hand and arm.

**pizza** – a popular Italian food made by forming dough (uncooked bread) into a large, flat circle and covering it with tomato sauce, cheese, and meats and vegetables and then baking it in the oven

\* The vegetarian pizza has zucchini, peppers, tomatoes, onions, and olives.

**licorice** – a candy with a long, straight shape, often with a spiral on the surface, usually red or black, that is chewy, often with the flavor of anise or strawberry

\* The licorice colored his teeth and tongue a grayish-black color.

**beef jerky** – a salty snack made by curing and drying pieces of beef or turkey that have been marinated (soaked) in a combination of flavors

\* William likes teriyaki beef jerky, but his wife prefers the peppered jerky.

**ice cream sandwich** – a dessert made by putting ice cream between two large cookies, eaten like a sandwich

\* Do you want an ice cream sandwich with vanilla or chocolate ice cream?

**highway robbery** – a very high price for something, so that the buyer feels as if he or she has had something stolen

\* They're charging \$5 for a soda? That's highway robbery!

**posted** – hung, written and displayed on a wall for people to see, not hidden

\* The students' exam scores were posted on the wall outside the professor's office.

**to commit** – to perform a crime

\* Who committed the murder?



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### COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of these foods is sweet?
  - a) Nachos
  - b) Snow cone
  - c) Beef jerky
2. What does Jim mean when he says, “That’s highway robbery”?
  - a) Someone has stolen his wallet.
  - b) He thinks Suki made an error when calculating the price.
  - c) He thinks the food is too expensive.

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### WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

#### **to hit**

The verb “to hit,” in this podcast, means to go somewhere and get something quickly, especially to buy something: “Do we have time to hit the deli for some sandwiches before the presentation begins?” The phrase “to hit the bottle” means to drink too much alcohol: “Wyatt is at the bar again, hitting the bottle.” The phrase “to hit a wall” means to confront an obstacle and suddenly be unable to continue making progress: “The author hit a wall and wasn’t able to write anything for weeks.” The phrase “to hit the road” means to begin a trip or journey: “They’re hoping to hit the road by 11:00.” Finally, the phrase “to hit the headlines” means to be reported widely in the media: “When this story hits the headlines, we’ll be famous!”

#### **posted**

In this podcast, the word “posted” means hung, written and displayed on a wall for people to see, not hidden: “The rules are posted on a wall where all the campers can see them.” A “post” can be a position or a job, especially in the government or in a large organization: “Who will get the top post in the new office?” When talking about construction, a “post” is a strong, tall piece of wood or metal used to support other objects: “How many posts will we need for the fence?” Or, “I wish this post weren’t here in the middle of the room, but it holds up the roof.” Finally, the old-fashioned and rude phrase “as deaf as a post” describes someone who has very bad or no hearing: “You’ll have to speak louder. She’s as deaf as a post.”



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### CULTURE NOTE

#### Dine-in Movie Theaters

For most Americans, going to the movies involves buying a bag of popcorn, “theater candy” (candy sold in rectangular boxes), and a soda at the concession stand. But “dine-in movie theaters” that serve a full meal are becoming increasingly popular across the United States. They commonly offer inexpensive food, like pizza and beer, but “lately” (in recent times), some theaters have begun offering “gourmet” (very fancy, with excellent flavor and quality) meals.

At some theaters, diners “place their order” (say what they want to buy and eat) in the “lobby” (the open part of the building, not where movies are shown) before they enter the theater, but the nicest dine-in movie theaters offer “table service” (where a server comes to one’s table or seat to take one’s order and returns to bring the food and take away the dirty plates). Many of these theaters have tables for the diners, so they don’t have to “balance” (keep something from falling down) a “tray” (a flat surface used to carry dishes) on their “lap” (the flat surface created on the top of one’s legs when one sits down).

Some theaters “attract patrons” (bring in more customers) by advertising that they have well-known “chefs” (people who cook) who might serve everything from “seafood” (fish and other foods taken from the ocean) and “sushi” (a Japanese style food with rice served under raw fish and vegetables) to pastas and “stir-fries” (a style of Asian cooking where vegetables and meat are cooked quickly in a small amount of very hot oil). And most of the theaters have a “liquor license” (permission to serve alcohol) and offer a variety of “cocktails” (drinks made by mixing different types of alcohol, fruit juices, and sodas) and beers.

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



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**COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT**

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 1,053 – Buying Food at a Concession Stand.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 1,053. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at [ESLPod.com](http://ESLPod.com). Become a member of ESL Podcast. Take a look at our special courses and/or ESL Podcast Blog while you're there.

This episode is a dialogue between Jim and Suki about buying food when you are at a movie theater. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Jim: We only have three minutes before the movie starts. You grab two seats and I'll hit the concession stand.

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Suki: Can I help you?

Jim: Yes, I'd like a large popcorn and a hot dog with the works.

Suki: Anything else?

Jim: Yes, I'll also take an order of nachos and a pretzel.

Suki: Sorry, we're out of pretzels right now, but we have cotton candy, snow cones, and pizza.

Jim: All right, then give me a slice of pizza.

Suki: Will that be all?

Jim: No, I'd also like a box of licorice, a package of beef jerky, and an ice cream sandwich.

Suki: Anything to drink?



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Jim: Yes, I'll take two large sodas.

Suki: All right, that'll be \$84.50.

Jim: What?! That's highway robbery!

Suki: Our prices are posted on the board. You can see them right up there. Do you still want all this?

Jim: Just give me the soda and popcorn.

Suki: Are you sure you'll make it through the movie with just that?

Jim: I have no choice. I'd have to commit robbery if I wanted anything else!

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with Jim talking to someone. We're not sure who, perhaps his wife or his girlfriend. "We only have three minutes before the movie starts. You grab two seats and I'll hit the concession stand." "To grab" (grab) normally means to use your hand and pick up something, often quickly. However, here it means to go and get two seats – to find two seats and to save them. There's also the idea here that the theater will fill up and all the good seats will be taken, and so it's important for Jim's friend (or wife, or girlfriend) to go and get two seats for them to sit in.

Jim says that he's going to "hit" (hit) the concession stand. "To hit" can mean a couple of different things in English. Here, it means to go somewhere and get something quickly, especially to buy something. You might say, "I'm going to hit the McDonald's for a hamburger and then drive on the freeway to my brother's house." "To hit" here means to go there quickly, get what I want, and leave.

Jim is going to go to the "concession (concession) stand (stand)." A concession stand is a place that sells food and drinks, especially in a movie theater or in a place where there is a concert or some sort of sporting event. If you go and watch a baseball game at Dodger Stadium here in Los Angeles, there are all sorts of concessions stands where you can buy food and drinks, including beer. If you do go to Dodger Stadium, of course, you should call me and invite me to go with you.

Jim is going to hit the concession stand not at Dodger Stadium, but at the movie theater. The woman at the movie theater, whose name I guess is Suki, says to



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Jim, “Can I help you?” That’s the typical way that someone working at a store will start a conversation – offering to help you. Jim says, “Yes, I’d like a large popcorn and a hot dog with the works.”

A “large popcorn” would be a large container of popcorn. “Popcorn” is a food made from the seeds or kernels of corn, usually put at very high heat either in oil or in very hot air. Popcorn is usually served at movie theaters. It’s a popular food at movie theaters, a popular snack. Typically, popcorn is served with a lot of butter and salt. Jim asked for “a large popcorn and a hot dog with the works.”

A “hot dog” is a food that looks like a small sausage. It’s a type of meat – often a mix of beef and pork, or sometimes just beef or just pork – that is very popular, again, at a concession stand, at a sporting event, or at a movie theater. Hot dogs are also eaten by Americans very commonly during the summer. I love hot dogs and eat them all the time since it’s always summer here in beautiful Los Angeles. Many people think hot dogs are a low-quality food, however, so now you know a little bit about the kind of food I eat.

Jim wants “a hot dog with the works” (works). When you order food such as a hot dog or a hamburger “with the works,” you are asking for all the typical toppings or other things that are put on the food. So, for a hamburger, for example, the works might include ketchup, mayonnaise, pickles, onions, mushrooms . . . mmm, making me hungry.

A hot dog with the works would probably have things such as mustard, ketchup, perhaps horseradish, other kinds of relishes – all of those are things that you might find on a hot dog. Me, I just like my hot dogs plain, nothing else on them. But Jim wants a hot dog with the works.

Suki says, “Anything else?” Jim says, “Yes, I’ll also take,” meaning I also want to buy, “an order of nachos and a pretzel.” An “order of nachos” is a small bowl of tortilla chips, which is kind of a Mexican specialty, or at least a Mexican-American specialty. “Nachos” are tortilla chips, fried tortilla chips typically, that have melted cheese on top of them.

A “pretzel” (pretzel) is a bread-like snack that is usually made into a certain shape. It’s a long tube of the dough of uncooked bread that is folded into a certain shape. It’s hard to describe. I guess usually it is a shape that looks a little like a heart. Pretzels usually have lots of salt on them. Suki says, “Sorry, we’re out of pretzels right now.” She means they don’t have any more pretzels to sell.



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She says, “But we have cotton candy, snow cones, and pizza.” “Cotton candy, snow cones, and pizza” are like nachos and pretzels – common foods at a concession stand in a place like a movie theater. Let’s start with “cotton (cotton) candy.” “Cotton” is a material that you make clothing out of, but that’s not what we’re talking about here. Cotton candy is a dessert that is made by using colored sugar. It looks a little like a balloon when you’re done with it. It’s very light and, of course, very sweet.

“Snow cones” are desserts made by shaving, that is cutting, ice into very small pieces and then putting it into a little container called a “paper cone” (cone). Then you put flavors on top of the ice – usually some sort of syrup, which is a thick, sweet sauce. You’ll often find snow cones sold at concession stands, but also at places like carnivals and fairs. A “pizza” is a popular Italian food made by using dough – uncooked bread – that’s flattened into a large flat circle, and you put all sorts of yummy, delicious, wonderful things on top of it, like cheese and meats and vegetables and tomato sauce.

Jim says, “All right,” meaning okay, “then give me a slice of pizza.” A “slice (slice) of pizza” is one part of the pizza. Remember, the pizza is a flat, round kind of food. A “slice” would just be one section of the pizza. Suki says, “Will that be all?” meaning “Do you want to order anything else?” Jim says, “No,” meaning “No, that would not be all. I have more things I want to buy.”

He says, “I’d also like a box of licorice, a package of beef jerky, and an ice cream sandwich.” “Licorice” (licorice) is a kind of long, thin candy, usually red or black, that is chewy, that doesn’t melt in your mouth. In other words, you have to chew it. Licorice was very popular when I was growing up. I’m not sure how popular it still is. I used to love licorice. All of these things, of course, are basically different forms of sugar that you shouldn’t be eating to begin with.

Jim also orders a package of “beef jerky” (jerky). Beef jerky is a little different. Beef jerky is not made with a lot of sugar. Instead, it is a salty snack that is made by drying pieces of beef or turkey that have been combined with different flavors. It’s a very different kind of food. Personally, I don’t really like beef jerky. I do like ice cream sandwiches, however. An “ice cream sandwich” is a dessert made by putting ice cream in between two large cookies, or things that kind of look like cookies. The kind that I like aren’t really cookies. It’s another kind of sweet covering that goes on both sides of the ice cream.

Suki then asks Jim, “Anything to drink?” Jim says, “Yes, I’ll take two large sodas.” Suki says, “All right, that’ll be \$84.50.” Jim says, “What?!” He’s very surprised at the high price of all of these snacks. He says, “That’s highway robbery!”



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“Highway robbery” (robbery) refers to a very high price for something, something that is way too expensive. When someone charges you a lot more than you think you should be charged, you might say, “That’s highway robbery.”

Suki says, “Our prices are posted on the board.” “Posted” (posted) here just means written and displayed so that you can see them. Suki says, “You can see them right up there” – she’s pointing to where the prices are. “Do you still want all this?” Jim says, “Just give me the soda and popcorn.” So, he’s not going to get anything else but soda pop and popcorn. Suki says, “Are you sure you’ll make it through the movie with just that?” She’s suggesting that Jim is going to need more food in order to last the entire time watching the movie. Remember, movies are between 90 and 120 minutes, typically.

Jim says, however, “I have no choice,” meaning I don’t have any other options. I’m forced to do this. “I’d have to commit robbery if I wanted anything else.” “To commit” (commit) means to perform – a crime, in this case. “Robbery” is when you steal something from someone. Jim is making a joke here. He’s saying that if he wanted anything else, he’ll have to steal it because he can’t afford the price. He doesn’t have enough money to buy all of these things.

It’s quite true that the prices in movie theaters for snacks at the concession stands are extremely expensive – much, much more expensive than in other places – but of course, they know that you don’t have anywhere else that you could buy these things, and most movie theaters don’t allow you to bring your own food in.

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

[start of dialogue]

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[end of dialogue]

You don't have to commit robbery to be able to listen to the wonderful scripts by our wonderful scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse.

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

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