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## ESL Podcast 1066 – Buying a Luxury Car

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### GLOSSARY

**luxury option** – an optional feature of a car or another product that is very comfortable, convenient, elegant, and expensive

\* The luxury options for this car include heated leather seats.

**sumptuous** – expensive-looking; luxurious; very nice

\* They enjoyed a sumptuous feast with roast beef, lobster, and quail.

**interior** – the inside of something; not the exterior or outside of something

\* Who chose the interior paint colors of your office?

**climate control system** – a system for controlling the temperature of a building or vehicle; a heating and cooling system

\* Somebody changed the settings of the climate control system, so now the air conditioning does turn on until it's 80 degrees in the office!

**voice-activated** – started or controlled by the sound of one's voice, without the need to touch any buttons, dials, or screens

\* This phone has voice-activated dialing, so you can place a phone call while driving without needing to press any buttons on your phone.

**navigation system** – a computerized system that displays a map and provides driving direction for going from one's current location to a destination

\* The navigation system said we should turn right on Linden Street, but the road was closed due to construction.

**remote starter** – technology that allows the owner to start a car from a distance, without putting the key in the ignition or touching a button inside the car, usually so that the car can be heated or cooled before the driver enters it

\* In Alaska, where temperatures are often below freezing, having a remote starter is a nice feature for drivers who don't want to be cold while they sit in the driver's seat, waiting for their car's engine to heat up.

**responsive handling** – the ability of a car to respond to very small movements of the steering wheel and/or gas pedal, so that the car immediately does what the driver wants it to do, without requiring significant effort

\* With my old car, I had to turn the steering wheel with a lot of force, but this car has really good responsive handling, so it's a lot easier to steer.



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**smooth ride** – the experience of riding in a car without bumps or significant vibrations, so that it almost feels as if one is not moving at all

\* If you want a really smooth ride, you'll need to change the shock absorbers in your truck.

**air bag** – a safety device placed inside the steering wheel, dashboard, and/or sides of cars, designed to fill a bag with air during a crash to protect the driver and passengers from being injured, so that they hit the bag full of air instead of the steering wheel or other parts of the car

\* Does this car have passenger-side airbags, or just an airbag for the driver?

**alert system** – a system that beeps and/or uses flashing lights as warnings that there is or could be a problem

\* Space shuttles have so many alert systems that sometimes it seems like the equipment is always beeping and flashing about something.

**blind spot** – an area that a driver cannot see, especially referring to the back left or right side of the car

\* Always check your blind spot before changing lanes.

**collision** – a car crash; an accident

\* What percentage of all collisions are caused by drunk drivers?

**car lot** – a large paved area where cars are displayed so that shoppers can view them and decide which one to buy

\* All of the new cars are parked at the front of the car lot, and the older ones are parked in the back.

**test drive** – an opportunity to drive a car that is for sale, so that one can decide whether one likes it and wants to buy it

\* To prevent theft, a car salesperson must be in the car when a customer goes on a test drive.



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**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

1. Which of these is a safety feature?
    - a) The climate control system
    - b) The navigation system
    - c) The alert system
  
  2. What does Daniel mean when he says, “It has such a smooth ride”?
    - a) The car is very comfortable to ride in.
    - b) The car is extremely expensive.
    - c) The car is popular and cool.
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**WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?**

**remote**

The phrase “remote starter,” in this podcast, means technology that allows the owner to start a car from a distance, without putting the key in the ignition or touching a button inside the car: “Harold turned on the car with his remote starter, but then he got distracted and forgot about it, so the car stayed on all afternoon until it ran out of gas.” The phrase “remote control” refers to a small device with many buttons, used to control the volume, channel, and other settings on a television, DVD player, or similar electronic device: “Please use the remote control to lower the volume during commercials.” Finally, the phrase “to work remotely” means to work from a distance, usually from one’s home on a computer, not in the office with one’s coworkers: “Jorge’s boss lets him work remotely one day each week.

**lot**

In this podcast, a “car lot” is a large paved area where cars are displayed so that shoppers can view them and decide which one to buy: “Wow, those new models look great on the car lot!” A “parking lot” is a large paved area where cars are parked, especially in front of a store or near an office building: “If you can’t find a parking spot on the street, try using the parking lot behind the building.” At an auction, a “lot” is a group of items that are sold together: “Shane bid on lot 37, which includes a beautiful oil painting and two small photos.” Finally, when talking about land, a “lot” is an area of land, especially one that does not have a building on it, that is being sold for development: “The developers are still trying to find buyers for three of their lots in the Franklin neighborhood.”



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### CULTURE NOTE

#### Popular Car Ornaments

Many people like to “accessorize” (decorate with extra, unnecessary objects that are attractive) their cars to “personalize them” (make them seem different than others, with their own personality) or “make a statement” (be perceived by others in a particular way), or even because they think it will bring them good luck.

Beginning in the 1950s, Americans began hanging “fuzzy” (covered with many soft hairs, like fur) “dice” (cubes with dots on each side, from one to six dots per surface, often used in games) from their “rear-view mirror” (the rectangular mirror that hangs inside the car at the top center of the windshield so that the driver can see what is behind the car). Some people think that “the practice” (doing something) was started by “pilots” (people whose job is to fly an airplane) in World War II, but no one is certain). Today the dice come in many different colors and sizes.

Sometimes people hang “graduation tassels” (colored pieces of string that are worn on a special hat during a graduation ceremony, with a small number showing the year of the graduation) as a reminder of their accomplishments. And others hang a symbol of their “faith” (religious beliefs), such as an image of a Catholic saint or a “rosary” (the beads that are used by Catholics when saying prayers), believing that it will bring them God’s protection while they are driving.

Other people hang a rabbit’s foot from the rear-view mirror, since a rabbit’s foot is “commonly” (by or among many people) believed to bring good luck. And still other people take a more “practical” (with necessary results or obvious benefits) approach, simply hanging an “air freshener” (something that makes the air smell better) from their rear-view mirror.

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



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**COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT**

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 1,066 – Buying a Luxury Car.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 1,066. 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). Take a look at our ESL Podcast Store, which has some additional courses in Business and Daily English. Are you on Facebook? Hey! So are we! Go to [facebook.com/eslpod](https://facebook.com/eslpod) and like us. We'll like you right back.

This episode of the ESL Podcast is about buying a “luxury” – or very expensive and nice – automobile. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Narin: This car is amazing.

Daniel: I know. It has every luxury option available.

Narin: This sumptuous interior is so comfortable.

Daniel: You haven't seen anything yet. It has a climate control system for every seat and a voice-activated entertainment system. It also has the best navigation system money can buy. Let me turn this car on with the remote starter.

Narin: That's impressive. How does it drive?

Daniel: It drives like a dream. It has the most responsive handling of any car I've driven, and it has such a smooth ride you'd hardly know we're moving.

Narin: You're right. It's like riding on a cloud.

Daniel: And this car is safe, too. It has seven air bags and an alert system for blind spots, which helps to avoid front and rear collisions.

Narin: Can you give me a ride home?



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Daniel: No, I have to get this car back to the car lot before my boss notices it's gone.

Narin: Couldn't you just tell him you were taking a potential customer out on a test drive?

Daniel: Again?

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with Narin saying to Daniel, "This car is amazing" – this car is wonderful. Daniel says, "I know. It has every luxury option available." An "option" is one possibility among many. The word "luxury" here is used to mean very nice and very expensive.

Narin says, "This sumptuous interior is so comfortable." She's saying that the inside of the car – the "interior" of the car, where the seats are – is "so comfortable," is very comfortable. The word "sumptuous" (sumptuous) is similar to the word "luxurious." They both mean expensive looking, very nice – very, in this case, comfortable.

Daniel says, "You haven't seen anything yet." This expression, "You haven't seen anything yet," means there is even something better about this particular item or thing. Daniel says, "It" – meaning the car – "has a climate control system for every seat." The word "climate" (climate) usually describes the weather, the atmosphere, the way things are outside. Is it rainy? Is it snowy? That is related to climate – how the general weather patterns are in a given area. Here in Southern California, we have a desert climate in part of the area, where it's very dry and warm.

Well, here we're talking about climate in a little different way. We're talking more about the atmosphere or environment of a certain place. "Climate control systems" in a car are ways of controlling the temperature of, in this case, the seats in the car. So, you could actually have one seat that was hotter than another. Weird, I know, but that's what some cars allow you to do if they have a climate control system.

Another thing that Daniel points out about this car is that it has a "voice-activated entertainment system." The word "activated" comes from the verb "to activate" (activate). "To activate" means to start something or to get something functioning or working. If something is "voice-activated," it turns on and off and does what you want it to do just by talking to it, just by speaking to it.



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A lot of modern cell phones, especially what are called “smart phones,” have voice-activated features. You can say something and the phone will do something. There are other kinds of technology that use voice activation. Daniel is talking about an “entertainment system” in a car, probably things like the CD or MP3 player.

Daniel says, “The car also has the best navigation system money can buy.” A “navigation system” is a part of the car that usually gives you a map and directions about how to get from where you are now to where you want to go. More commonly, at least in the United States, this is called a “GPS” system, for “global positioning system.” In other countries, they might use different terms. In Great Britain, sometimes they use the term “Sat Nav” for “Satellite Navigation.” The word “navigation” in general is used to mean how you get from one place to another.

Daniel concludes by saying, “Let me turn this car on with the remote starter.” A “starter” (starter) in this case is something that starts the engine, that gets the motor or the engine running, or working. The word “remote” (remote) in general means something that is from a distance to another thing. If you have a television, you probably have what we would call a “remote control,” or simply a “remote.” It’s a way of controlling the television without having to get up, walk across the room, and change the channel or the volume.

You know, kids, that’s how we used to do it back when I was younger. You actually had to get out of your chair in order to turn the channel on the television. Crazy, right? I know. Well, now some cars, instead of using a key that you put into a part of the car to start the engine, have remote starters – things that you can use to start your car even if you’re not in the car. Why would you want to start your car if you’re not in it? I have no idea, but you can do it, and that’s the important thing.

Narin says, “That’s impressive.” Something that is “impressive” is something that you think is great, is amazing. She then asks Daniel, “How does it drive?” meaning is it a comfortable drive when you ride in the car? Do you feel comfortable? Does it move fast when you want it to go fast? And so forth. Daniel says, “It drives like a dream.” A “dream” is normally something you have when you’re sleeping. It’s something that is part of your imagination, but here it’s used to mean it’s wonderful. It’s excellent.

He says that the car “has the most responsive handling of any car I’ve driven.” The word “responsive” (responsive) is related to the verb “to respond” (respond).



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“To respond” means to react when someone else says something or does something. If someone asks you a question, you answer the question by responding. The person says something to you; you say something back to the person. “Responsive,” then, has to do with how well something reacts.

The word “handling” (handling) refers, in general, to how easy it is to control the car. You know, sometimes you have cars where, when you turn the steering wheel (the round wheel that you turn inside the car in order to make it go to the left or to the right) the car turns right away. You have other cars where you have to turn the wheel a lot in order to get the car to turn one direction or the other.

I used to own, many years ago, an old station wagon. It was a big, long car and it was sort of like riding in a boat or a ship. You’d turn the wheel and it would take a long time for the car to move left or right. Well, that’s what we’re talking about when we refer to “responsive handling” of a car. Daniel says, “The car has a smooth ride.” A “ride” (ride) here refers simply to how comfortable the car is. “Smooth” (smooth) is an adjective meaning that it’s very comfortable. There aren’t a lot of up and downs, a lot of bumps that you feel when you are riding in the car.

Narin (who’s I guess now in the car, riding in it) says, “You’re right. It’s like riding on a cloud.” A “cloud” is that white material that you see up in the sky from which we get rain and snow and other forms of water. Narin compares driving in the car, or riding in the car, to riding on a cloud, where you seem to go by very smoothly like a cloud might in the sky.

Daniel says, “And this car is safe, too. It has seven airbags and an alert system for blind spots, which helps to avoid front and rear collisions.” “Airbags” are these bags that blow up, or inflate, if your car is in an accident. The airbags prevent you from hurting yourself – at least, that’s what they’re supposed to do. An “alert system for blind spots” refers to usually a computer in the car that will tell you if there is someone in your blind spot. Your “blind (blind) spot” is the area next to your car that is difficult to see in the mirrors of the car.

That’s why whenever you, for example, change from one lane to another, from one part of the street or highway to another, you should always look behind you and to your side to make sure there isn’t another car there. Sometimes you don’t see the car there in your mirrors. So some cars, I guess, have these alert systems for blind spots. I have in my car, usually, an alert system. I call it “my wife.” She will yell and scream if I’m about to hit another car. It works very well and it’s a lot cheaper than most of these new cars. Well, a little cheaper.



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Anyway, Daniel is talking about an alert system for blind spots, and he says that this alert system helps avoid front and rear collisions. A “collision” (collision) is when one car hits another. It’s an accident, or a “crash,” we might call it. Narin says, “Can you give me a ride home?” Daniel says, “No, I have to get this car back to the car lot before my boss notices it’s gone.” So now we understand the story. Daniel doesn’t own this car; he works at a place that sells cars. We would call it a “car lot” (lot), and he’s borrowed this car and is probably trying to impress this girl by the name Narin.

Narin says, “Couldn’t you just tell him,” meaning the boss, “you were taking a potential customer out on a test drive?” A “test drive” is when you go to a car lot to buy a car and drive in the car before you buy it. You want to see if you like the car or not, so you take it on a test drive. Narin is suggesting, then, that Daniel just tell his boss that he was out with the car with a potential customer. A “customer” is someone who buys something. A “potential customer” is someone who might buy something.

Daniel responds to Narin’s suggestion by saying, “Again?” The idea is that he has already used this excuse before when he has, we are guessing, taken cars out of the car lot to drive.

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

[start of dialogue]

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Narin: Couldn't you just tell him you were taking a potential customer out on a test drive?

Daniel: Again?

[end of dialogue]

We give you luxurious scripts here at ESL Podcast, rich in English. Thanks to our wonderful scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse. Thank you, Lucy.

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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