



ESL Podcast 385 – Exercising at the Gym

GLOSSARY

weight machine – a piece of equipment that one uses to build one’s muscles, usually by pulling or pushing a heavy part of the equipment

* Shane started using a new weight machine at the gym last month and his arms are already much larger than they were before.

to try (something) out – to do or use something a small number of times or for a short period of time to find out whether one likes it and wants to continue

* Kelly tried out five different types of bicycles before she decided which one to buy.

muscle – one of many body parts that is connected to bones and allows one to move

* Their leg muscles hurt a lot after their 18-mile hike up and down that mountain.

to ache – to hurt with a dull pain that lasts over time; to feel discomfort with a weak pain

* His tooth has been aching for a week, so he’s going to schedule an appointment with the dentist.

gym – a building where people go to exercise indoors; a place where people go to play sports and to exercise

* Some employers give all their employees free membership to a gym because they want to encourage their workers to be healthy and active.

cardio – cardiovascular; related to the heart and/or activities designed to make the heart beat more quickly for exercise

* Running, swimming, and bicycling are all great cardio activities.

workout – a period of physical exercise to improve one’s health; a series of physical exercises to lose weight

* Hercilia had a great workout yesterday, running five eight-minute miles.

treadmill – a machine that one stands on, where the part below one’s feet moves so that one can walk or run at any speed

* Some people enjoy walking on a treadmill while they watch TV so that they can get some exercise while seeing their favorite shows.



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stationary bike – a machine that is like a bicycle, but the wheels do not touch the ground, so the user doesn't go anywhere

* I like riding a real bicycle more than a stationary bike because it is good to be outside and get some fresh air.

free weights – small, heavy pieces of metal or plastic that one can hold in one's hands or attach to one's wrists or ankles for exercise

* Prissy has started carrying free weights on her evening walks so that she can get more exercise.

strength-training – the practice of exercising to build one's muscles and become stronger

* Doctors recommend that women do strength-training exercises a few times a week to protect their bones later in life.

personal trainer – a person whose job is to help other people learn how to exercise correctly and meet their health goals

* Wendy hired a personal trainer who helped her lose 20 pounds in just three months.

regimen – a special plan that one follows, especially to improve one's health

* Dr. Litchman put us on a new dietary regimen that includes a lot of fruits, vegetables, and fish.

to look out for (someone) – to look for someone; to look around and see if someone is in a particular place

* You should look out for Marcus when you go to that grocery store because he always shops there.

to sweat – to lose water through the very small holes in one's skin, usually because one's body is hot and needs to cool down

* If you sweat a lot, you need to drink extra water to replace the water that your body is losing.

locker room – a large room in a gym where people can take a shower and change their clothes

* The men's locker room always smells like dirty socks!



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of these might you use for strength-training?
 - a) A weight machine.
 - b) A treadmill.
 - c) A locker room.

2. What does Sally mean by saying, “I’ll look out for you”?
 - a) She is offering to help Jae learn to use the equipment.
 - b) She wants to protect Jae from something dangerous.
 - c) She is promising to look for him when she’s at the gym.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

trainer

The phrase “personal trainer,” in this podcast, means a person whose job is to help other people learn how to exercise correctly and meet their health goals: “The gym gives all of its new members one free session with a personal trainer.” A “trainer” can be anyone who helps another person learn how to do something: “Kirk is working with a great trainer to improve his throwing technique.” Or: “The company wants to find a good trainer to teach its employees how to use computers more effectively.” Finally, “cross-trainers” are shoes that can be used for many different kinds of sports: “Do I need to buy special shoes to play on the tennis courts, or can I wear my cross-trainers?”

to look out for

In this podcast, the phrase “to look out for (someone)” means to look around and see if someone is in a particular place: “I’m looking out for Michael because I need to ask him something today.” The same phrase can also mean to protect and take care of someone: “Young children need adults to look out for them when they cross the street.” The phrase “to look out for (something)” means to avoid doing something wrong or bad: “Look out for snakes when you walk through the tall grass!” Finally, the phrase “look out” is used to tell someone to be careful, especially when something bad is about to happen: “Look out! You almost stepped into that hole in the sidewalk!”



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CULTURE NOTE

People who go to a gym in the United States are expected to follow common gym “etiquette” (rules and expectations about how one should behave to be polite and considerate of other people). In some gyms, these rules are “posted” (hung where people can see them) on a wall, but in other gyms people are simply expected to know “proper” (correct) etiquette.

One of the important rules of gym etiquette is to “wipe down” (move a cloth over something to pick up a liquid) the exercise machines after using them. People who are exercising sweat a lot, and some of that sweat falls onto the machine. It is “gross” (disgusting and unpleasant) and “unhygienic” (unclean) if the next person has to use a machine that it is covered in someone else’s sweat. That is why most gyms provide small towels and “spray bottles” (bottles that have a top that can be squeezed so that a small amount of liquid comes out) to wipe down the machines.

Another important rule of gym etiquette is to never “hog” (use too much of something, or use something for too long) the machines. Gyms have limited equipment, and sometimes there are more people than machines. Most gyms have a “time limit” (the maximum amount of time for doing something) of 20 or 30 minutes for their machines if another person is waiting to use it. People who want to use a machine for longer than that time limit need to get off the machine and offer it to others. If no one else wants it, then they can get back on it and continue exercising.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 385: Exercising at the Gym.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 385. 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. You can download a Learning Guide for this episode to help you improve your English even faster.

This episode is called "Exercising at the Gym." It's a dialogue between Jae and Sally about common exercise-related vocabulary. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Jae: Hi, are you done with this weight machine?

Sally: Yeah, I am. I was just trying it out. I think I must be doing something wrong. My muscles are aching already.

Jae: Maybe I can help. I've been working out on these machines for a few months, so I'm pretty used to them.

Sally: I just joined the gym this week. I usually do a cardio workout on a treadmill or stationary bike, and I've used free weights at home before. But now it makes sense to do my strength-training here.

Jae: Have you thought about getting a personal trainer? When I joined, I signed up for a trainer for a few sessions and she helped me set up a good regimen.

Sally: That's a good idea.

Jae: If you want help with those machines, though, I'm usually here every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Sally: Thanks, I'll definitely look out for you. I'm Sally.

Jae: I'm Jae. Nice to meet you.

Sally: You, too. I think I've sweated enough today. I'm off to the locker room.



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Jae: Yeah, me too. See ya!

Sally: Bye!

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue begins with Jae saying to Sally, “Hi, are you done with this weight machine (are you finished using this weight machine)?” A “weight machine” is a piece of equipment that you use to make your muscles bigger, usually by pulling or pushing some heavy weight. “Weight,” here, refers to any object that is very heavy that is used for exercising, in this case.

Sally says, “Yeah, I am (I am finished – I am done). I was just trying it out.” To “try something out” is a phrasal verb meaning to do or to use something a small number of times or for a short period until you see whether you like it or not – until you see whether you want to continue. “I’m trying out the computer at the computer store” – I’m typing on it, I’m trying to see if I will like it.

Sally says, “I think I must be doing something wrong. My muscles are aching already.” Your “muscles” are the parts of your body that move the bones that allow you to have movement. To “ache” (ache) is a verb meaning to have a pain; you feel discomfort. It isn’t a strong pain; an ache is something that hurts, but it isn’t very intense.

Jae says, “Maybe I can help.” Of course, Jae sees a beautiful woman at a weight machine and he offers to help – what a nice guy! Jae says, “I’ve been working out on these weight machines for a few months, so I’m pretty used to them.” To “work out on” means to exercise using these machines. He says he’s “pretty used to,” meaning he’s very used to them; he knows how they work.

Sally then tells Jae, “I just joined the gym this week.” “Gym” is short for “gymnasium,” a place where you exercise. Sally says, “I usually do a cardio workout on a treadmill or stationary bike.” “Cardio” is short for “cardiovascular,” which is a word describing something related to the heart, or things designed to make the heart beat (or work) faster. Cardiovascular, what we say simply as “cardio,” is, in this case, a type of exercise like running or jogging to get your heart to beat faster.

Sally says that she does her “cardio workout” (her cardio exercise) on a treadmill. A “treadmill” is a machine where one part of the machine is moving so that you can walk with your feet, or jog or run, but you stay in one place. So, the machine moves, and you walk or jog with it. To “tread” is a verb meaning to walk. The



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“stationary bike” is a bicycle, but a bicycle that doesn’t move. So you just move the wheel of the bicycle, we would say you “pedal” the bicycle, but you are not moving anywhere; you do it just for the exercise.

Sally says that she’s used free weights at home before. A “free weight” is a large, heavy object that you do not have inside of a machine. So for example, when you are watching the Olympic weightlifting champions, and they lift a lot of weights, those weights are called “free weights”; they’re not connected or attached to any machine. Sally says, “now it makes sense to do my strength-training here.” “Strength-training” is when you do exercise to make your muscles bigger and stronger, like me. If you see me, you know I do a lot of strength-training – I’m just kidding!

Sally wants to do some strength-training – make her muscles bigger so she can protect herself against nice guys like Jae! Jae then asks, “Have you thought about getting a personal trainer?” A “personal trainer” is a person who has the job of helping you exercise correctly, someone who gives you advice and tips about how to use the machines and how to use the weights, someone who is there to motivate you. A “trainer” (trainer) is any person who trains or gives instruction to another person. There are a couple of meanings of that word; take a look at our Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

Jae says, “When I joined (meaning when I joined the gym), I signed up for a trainer for a few sessions and she helped me set up a good regimen.” When he signed up for the gym (when he joined the gym), he also signed up for a personal trainer for a few sessions (a few times, maybe two or three different days). This trainer helped him set up a good regimen. A “regimen” is a special plan that you follow, usually something to improve your health – to make you healthier.

Sally says, “That’s a good idea.” And then Jae says, “If you want help with those machines, though, I’m usually here every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.” Here we go! This is what Jae was waiting for, an opportunity to give Sally some extra help – of course, to get to know her better! Jae says that he is usually at the gym every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Sally says, “Thanks, I’ll definitely look out for you.” To “look out for” someone, in this dialogue, means to look for someone – to look around to see if you can find a certain person in a particular place. To “look out for” has a couple of different meanings in English; take a look at the Learning Guide for those explanations.

So, Sally appears to be interested in Jae. She introduces herself by giving her name; she says, “I’m Sally.” Jae says, “I’m Jae. Nice to meet you.” Sally says, “You, too,” meaning nice to me you, too. “I think I’ve sweated enough today,”



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she says. To “sweat” means to lose water through your skin. If you work very hard, you will sweat. I usually don’t sweat, because I don’t work very hard! Sally says, “I’m off to the locker room.” The “locker room” is a large room in a gym where you can change your clothes (you can put on special gym clothes, shorts and a shirt) and you can take a shower and clean up after you have sweated working out on the weight machines. Jae says, “Yeah, me too,” meaning I’m going to go to locker room, too. Then he says to Sally, “See ya!” meaning see you later, and Sally says, “Bye!” Of course, we have to come back the next Monday, Wednesday, or Friday to see what happens with Jae and Sally then!

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

[start of dialogue]

Jae: Hi, are you done with this weight machine?

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Jae: Maybe I can help. I’ve been working out on these machines for a few months, so I’m pretty used to them.

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Jae: Have you thought about getting a personal trainer? When I joined, I signed up for a trainer for a few sessions and she helped me set up a good regimen.

Sally: That’s a good idea.

Jae: If you want help with those machines, though, I’m usually here every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Sally: Thanks, I’ll definitely look out for you. I’m Sally.

Jae: I’m Jae. Nice to meet you.

Sally: You, too. I think I’ve sweated enough today. I’m off to the locker room.

Jae: Yeah, me too. See ya!



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Sally: Bye!

[end of dialogue]

The script for this episode was written by someone who always follows a healthy regimen, Dr. Lucy Tse.

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

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