



ESL Podcast 642 – Installing Windows and Doors

GLOSSARY

to bite off more than (one) can chew – to try to do something that is too big or difficult for one to actually do or finish

* Erick tried to go to school full-time and work 30 hours per week, but he bit off more than he could chew.

do-it-yourself project – a project that one does alone, without hiring professionals, especially when referring to work done on or around one's home

* Painting and landscaping can be do-it-yourself projects, but if anything's wrong with your home's electricity, it's a good idea to hire professional electricians.

to install – to put something in or onto something else so that it can be used

* When did you install the new water heater?

to learn as (one) goes – to learn through experience; to learn by doing; to do something without instruction, teaching oneself things as one needs to know them

* This is the first time we've changed the oil in a car, but we'll learn as we go.

double-paned – with two pieces of glass very close to each other, but with a small amount of air in between, providing better protection from the weather and noise than a single-paned window

* After they installed double-paned windows, their heating bills were a lot lower.

to slide – to move smoothly and gently in one direction, rubbing against something else

* He slid his hands over the table Jan had just finished making, feeling its smoothness.

frame – a square or rectangular shape that goes around something else, such as a picture frame

* Sheila bought a frame so that she could hang her diploma on the wall.

screen – a piece of wire or plastic netting with very small holes, hung behind a door or window so that the door or window can be left open to let in fresh air, but not let insects come inside

* These screens do a great job of keeping flies out of the house.

latch – a small piece of metal that can be moved to hold something closed or to let it be opened

* I couldn't open your gate. How does the latch work?



ESL Podcast 642 – Installing Windows and Doors

to give (someone) a hand – to help someone with something

* Could you please give me a hand with these heavy boxes?

to get (something) out of the way – to do something unpleasant immediately, without delaying, so that one can then forget about it and focus on other things

* Let's get these dirty dishes out of the way so that we can enjoy the rest of the evening.

nightfall – sunset; the time between afternoon and evening, when the sky begins to get dark

* Mom told us to make sure we're back home by nightfall.

jamb – one of the vertical pieces of wood on the sides of a window or door

* Are you going to paint the jambs the same color as the doors?

hinge – a small piece of metal that lets a door or lid (the top on a box) move to open or close

* If the door hinges are squeaky, try putting a little bit of oil on them.

rusted – oxidized; with an orange or red powdery dust that is created when metal gets wet

* Their car was rusted, because they left it out in the rain all winter.

stuck – not able to move; locked in a certain position or place

* Hamed's key got stuck in the ignition and he couldn't pull it out.

frostbite – a condition where one's fingers and toes get too cold, causing pain and skin damage

* If you don't wear warmer gloves, you might get frostbite walking in those mountains!



ESL Podcast 642 – Installing Windows and Doors

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Why does Genevive refer to the window as a “double-paned” one?
 - a) Because it’s twice as much work as she expected.
 - b) Because it has two pieces of glass.
 - c) Because it is twice as big as the other windows.
 2. Which of these is part of a doorframe?
 - a) The jamb.
 - b) The hinge.
 - c) The latch.
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WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

slide

The verb “to slide,” in this podcast, means to move smoothly and gently in one direction, rubbing against something else: “This dresser is too heavy to lift, but we can slide it over the carpet.” The verb “to slide” can also mean to decrease: “Our sales slid more than 20% last month.” The phrase “to let (something) slide” means to let something get worse: “How could you let your work slide so much?” The phrase “to let (something) slide” can also mean to choose to ignore something: “In the past, we’ve always let it slide when James says things like that, but not anymore!” Finally, at a playground, a “slide” is a long, flat piece of metal or plastic that is placed at an angle so that a child can sit on it and move downwards quickly: “Little kids want their parents to catch them at the bottom of a slide.”

stuck

In this podcast, the word “stuck” means not able to move, or locked in a certain position or place: “Grant was stuck in traffic for hours.” Or, “How did you get your finger stuck in the car door?” The phrase “to be stuck” can mean to be unable to do something because it is too difficult: “I tried to do the homework, but I got stuck on question number seven.” The phrase “to be stuck with (someone)” means to be forced to spend time with someone whom one doesn’t like: “Olivia agreed to be a mentor, but now she’s stuck with this irresponsible, immature college student.” Finally, the phrase “to be stuck on (someone)” means to have a crush or to be attracted to someone: “As a child, were you ever stuck on one of your teachers?”



ESL Podcast 642 – Installing Windows and Doors

CULTURE NOTE

In recent years, the U.S. government has tried to encourage Americans to install “energy-efficient” (using the smallest amount of energy possible) “appliances” (electrical equipment in a home) in their home to reduce the country’s “dependence” (need to use something) on oil. One of the ways it does this is by providing financial “incentives” (something that rewards one for doing something) like “tax breaks” (a decrease in the amount of tax one must pay).

For example, homeowners who install energy-efficient windows, doors, “insulation” (material in walls and in ceilings used to prevent heat from leaving), and “HVAC” (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning) systems may be “eligible” (allowed to have) for a “tax credit” (a decrease in the amount of tax one must pay).

The government is also encouraging Americans to “generate” (produce) their own energy through solar energy (capturing the sun’s energy to use as power), wind turbines (using large windmills to make power), and other “renewable energy” (using resources that can be used many times) technologies. Americans who install eligible renewable energy systems may get a tax credit, too.

In recent years, Americans have also received tax credits for purchasing “hybrid cars” (cars that use gas and electricity, depending on which is most efficient), “plug-in electric cars” (cars that use electricity and are plugged into electrical outlets to charge), and “alternative fuel vehicles” (cars that use ethanol or natural gas instead of gasoline).

Getting these tax credits requires filling out some extra paperwork and completing the purchase or installation within a specific period of time, but they can be a powerful incentive to change Americans’ behavior and energy consumption.

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



ESL Podcast 642 – Installing Windows and Doors

COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 642: Installing Windows and Doors.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 642. 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 to download one of our Learning Guides. The Learning Guides are made for every episode, and help you improve your English even faster by giving you vocabulary, definitions, sample sentences, additional definitions, culture notes, and – everyone together now – a complete transcript of this episode.

This episode is called “Installing Windows and Doors,” so let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Vern: I really think we've bitten off more than we can chew. I like do-it-yourself projects, but installing a new window and a new door isn't as easy as it looks.

Genevive: What we don't know, we'll learn as we go. Okay, we've removed the old window. This new double-paned one is going to be great and it'll slide open and close easily, unlike the old one. We just need to put in a new frame first, and then we can move it into place.

Vern: You make it sound so easy. Is the screen going to fit? It looks too big.

Genevive: Oh sure, it'll fit.

Vern: This latch doesn't seem to be working.

Genevive: It'll work once it's installed. Come on, give me a hand. Hmm...the new window doesn't seem to fit exactly. I'm not sure what the problem is. Let me think about it. Let's move on to the door and come back to it later.

Vern: Are you sure?

Genevive: Sure, I'm sure. Installing the new door will be easier and we can get it out of the way.



ESL Podcast 642 – Installing Windows and Doors

Vern: Maybe we should wait until the window is installed. If we can't finish installing the window and the door before nightfall, it'll be a very cold night in the house.

Genevive: Don't worry. Let's see, first we have to remove the old door without damaging the jamb. The hinges are rusted; it seems to be stuck. Oh, I think it's finally coming off.

Vern: See? Replacing the door isn't going to be as easy as you thought, is it?

Genevive: I got it off in the end, didn't I?

Vern: Yes, but will you be able to put in the new one before I die of frostbite?

[end of dialogue]

Vern and Genevive are “installing,” or putting in new windows and doors in their house. Vern begins by saying, “I really think we’ve bitten off more than we can chew.” This is an old expression. “To bite off (bitten is the past tense of bite – actually, it’s the past participle but we won’t go into that now) more than you can chew” – “to bite off more than you can chew.” This expression means to try to do something that is too difficult for you to do, or for you to finish. “To bite” means to typically use your teeth when you are eating food. You can take a bite out of an apple for example; you put the apple in your mouth and you take a piece. “To chew” means to move your jaw up down so that the food goes in between your teeth and you’re able to swallow it. But this expression means that you, in a sense, have taken or bitten off too much and you can’t possibly chew it. Again, it’s a general expression to mean you try to do something that is too big or too difficult.

Vern says, “I like do-it-yourself projects, but installing a new window and a new door isn’t as easy as it looks.” “Do-it-yourself,” sometimes abbreviated “DIY,” is when you do something typically around your house, such as making a desk or building a table. In other words, you don’t pay someone else to do it or buy it; you do it yourself. So, a “do-it-yourself project” would be for example trying to install a new window. “To install” means to put something into something else or to put something onto something else so that it can be used. When you buy a new water heater, to make your water hot, you have to install it. You have to take it out of the box, put it where it belongs, connect the water, the electricity or the gas, and so forth. That’s to install. We use this verb a lot; we even use it in the computer world. We talk about installing software, that’s putting the software onto your computer so you can use it.



ESL Podcast 642 – Installing Windows and Doors

Vern doesn't think that a new window or a new door is as easy as it looks, meaning you look at it and you think oh, that won't be very difficult but then when you try to do it, it is very difficult. Genevive says, "What we don't know, we'll learn as we go." "To learn as you go" means to learn through experience, learn through doing. You don't take a class, you don't read a book, you just do it and you learn as you are doing whatever it is you are doing. That's to learn as you go.

Genevive, of course, thinks that they can install this new window and new door. She says, "Okay, we've removed (we've gotten rid of; we took out) the old window. This new double-paned one is going to be great and it'll slide open and close easily, unlike the old one." So Vern and Genevive are trying to install a double-paned window. "Double-paned" (paned) is when you have a window with two pieces of glass very close to each other, but there's a small amount of air – sometimes there's a special gas they use – between the two pieces of glass. What this does is it makes the window thicker, or more importantly, it makes it so that you don't hear what's going on outside, or at least you hear less of what's going on outside. I, for example, need a double-paned window in my house so that I don't hear the children outside. Or I can do what I usually do, which is go outside and tell the little kids to be quiet. I'm that nice kind of neighbor, you know!

So, Genevive says that the double-paned window is going to be great. She says, "it'll slide open and close easily." "To slide" (slide) means to move smoothly in one direction, typically when you are rubbing against something else. I could take a glass of water and slide it across the table; I push it so that moves smoothly across the table. In this case, the windows are going to slide open and close easily, "unlike the old one," meaning the old one did not do that. Genevive says, "We just need to put in a new frame first, and then we can move it into place." The "frame" (frame) is the square or rectangular shape usually made of wood or metal that goes around something; in this case, it goes around the window. You could also have a picture frame, which is the part that you see on the very outside – on all four sides – that holds the picture in place.

Vern says, "You make it sound so easy. Is the screen going to fit? It looks too big." A "screen" is something that you put behind a door or a window so that you can open the door or window and no bugs or flies will come in. It's usually made of metal or plastic with lots of small holes in it. Genevive says, "Oh sure, it'll fit," meaning it will be able to be put here, the space will be right, it will not be too big. Vern says, "This latch doesn't seem to be working." A "latch" is a small piece of metal that you move to hold something closed or to let it be open. So on a



ESL Podcast 642 – Installing Windows and Doors

window, you typically have a little latch that when you move it in a certain direction allows you to open the window; when you move it in a different direction, it will keep the window closed. That's a latch (latch).

Vern doesn't think the latch is working, but Genevive says, "It'll work once it's installed. Come on, give me a hand." "To give (someone) a hand" means to help them do something, usually something physical like moving boxes or installing windows. Genevive says, "Hmm (she's uncertain about something or she's surprised by something)...the new window doesn't seem to fit exactly," meaning it doesn't go in the space perfectly; it must be too big or too small. "I'm not sure what the problem is," she says, "Let me think about it. Let's move on to the door (let's start working on the door now) and come back to the window later." Vern says, "Are you sure?" Genevive says, "Sure, I'm sure (meaning yes I am sure; I am certain). Installing the new door will be easier and we can get it out of the way." "To get (something) out of the way" means to do something that you don't really like first; do it immediately so that you can forget about it and go on to do something that you like better. That's to get something out of the way.

Vern says, "Maybe we should wait until the window is installed. If we can't finish installing the window and the door before nightfall, it'll be a very cold night in this house." "Nightfall" (one word) is the time when, or at the time when the sun sets; the time between afternoon and evening, when the sky begins to go dark. That's nightfall.

Vern says that if they don't get the window and door installed they're going to be cold tonight. Genevive says, "Don't worry. Let's see, first we have to remove the old door without damaging the jamb" (jamb). The "jamb" is one of the vertical pieces of wood on the sides of the window or the door; they could also be made of metal. She says, "The hinges are rusted; it seems to be stuck." A "hinge" is a small piece of metal that attaches the door to the doorjamb; it allows the door to open and close. It's what connects the door typically to the "doorjamb," or the permanent, unmovable part of the doorframe. When something is "rusted" we mean that it has an orange or red dust on it that is sometimes created when metal gets wet. The technical term would be "oxidized." So what happens is the hinges are rusted, and that makes it difficult to open the door, that's why Genevive says the door seems to be stuck. When something is "stuck" (stuck) you cannot move it or open it; it is something that you can't change because there's some problem.

Genevive says, "Oh, I think it's finally coming off." Vern says, "See? Replacing the door isn't going to be as easy as you thought?" But Genevive doesn't give up, she says, "I got it off in the end, didn't I?" "In the end" means finally; after



ESL Podcast 642 – Installing Windows and Doors

some work I did get the door off. Vern says, “Yes, but will you be able to put in the new one (the new door) before I die of frostbite (frostbite – one word)?” “Frostbite” is a condition where your fingers or your toes, typically, are too cold and it starts damage your skin; it can even lead to damage to your fingers and toes. If you live in a northern climate – that is, a place where it gets cold during the winter, you probably know about frostbite.

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

[start of dialogue]

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ESL Podcast 642 – Installing Windows and Doors

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[end of dialogue]

We hope that you are learning as you go by listening to these podcasts. We thank our scriptwriter, Dr. Lucy Tse, for making that possible.

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

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