



ESL Podcast 679 – Getting a Makeover

GLOSSARY

makeover – a service in which one changes one’s appearance by changing one’s hair, makeup and clothing; a professional service that changes one’s appearance

* Carrie agreed to get a makeover, but she wouldn’t let anyone cut her long hair.

to have no say – for one’s opinion not to matter; for one to not be in control of a situation; for one not to be able to determine what will happen

* As soon as I turn 18 years old, I’ll be able to do whatever I want and you will have no say in it.

intervention – a process in which close friends or relatives tell someone something that is difficult or painful to hear, especially to confront someone about a serious problem, like alcoholism or a drug addiction

* Jake, we’ve asked you to come here tonight for an intervention. We’re all worried about how much you’ve been drinking lately.

to let (oneself) go – to stop caring about one’s physical appearance; to stop worrying about whether one is beautiful; to stop trying to dress well and look pretty

* Jacques is afraid to get married because he thinks his future wife will let herself go.

to primp – to spend time in front of a mirror, making small changes to make oneself more attractive and more beautiful

* How many hours a day do you think she spends primping in front of the mirror to look like that?

to get dolled up – to dress up; to put on nice clothes and do one’s hair and makeup nicely; to try to look as nice as possible for a special occasion or event

* The senior prom is a special night when all of the students can get dolled up.

frumpy – referring to things that are old, wrinkled, and out of style or not fashionable

* When you wear such frumpy clothing, it makes you look at least 10 years older than you actually are.

out-of-date – outdated; not modern or current; not fashionable; relating to an earlier period of time

* The market is changing so quickly that this new product will be out-of-date by the time we’re able to manufacture it.



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look – style; one’s type of physical appearance

* Martina likes to wear different glasses every day to change her look.

transformation – a major or important change; a complete or thorough change

* If a phone company wants to be successful, it will have to go through a transformation to better serve smart phones and provide wireless Internet service.

appearance – the way one appears or looks to other people; the way one is seen physically

* Sarah warned her parents that her boyfriend was a really nice person, but because of his long hair and tattoos it might take them a while to get used to his appearance.

to update – to change something to make it more modern or more appropriate for the current situation.

* Would you please update your sales report with the most recent figures?

free rein – the ability or permission to do whatever one wants without being controlled or monitored by other people

* You can have free rein to decorate your room however you want, but you can’t spend more than \$100.

to come quietly – to do something without protesting or fighting against it; to agree to do something without complaining about it

* I need you to do something right now and I don’t have time to explain it. Please trust me and come quietly.

one way or another – a phrase used to insist that someone do something when he or she does not have control over how it will be done; a phrase used to make someone do something he or she does not want to do

* You have to pay your taxes one way or another, so just do it without complaining.

to drag (someone) kicking and screaming – to force someone do something he or she does not want to do; to make someone do something he or she is strongly opposed to and is complaining loudly about

* I don’t want to go to a country music concert. If you want me to go with you, you’ll have to drag me kicking and screaming.



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What did Ellie do in the past that she isn't doing now?
 - a) She used to spend more time improving her appearance.
 - b) She used to curl her hair.
 - c) She used to play with dolls.

 2. According to Kurt, what is wrong with Ellie's clothes?
 - a) Her clothes are too big.
 - b) Her clothes are too small.
 - c) Her clothes don't look nice.
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WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to let (oneself) go

The phrase "to let (oneself) go," in this podcast, means to stop caring about one's physical appearance and stop worrying about whether one is beautiful: "After the birth of her twins, Meghan really let herself go." The phrase "to let (something) go" means to stop worry about something: "Yes, you lost some money, but it was just \$20, so let it go!" The phrase "to let (someone) down" means to disappoint someone, or to do something that makes another person feel sad: "He apologized to his parents for having let them down." The phrase "to let (something) slip" means to share a secret accidentally: "I didn't mean to tell him, but somehow I just let it slip." Finally, the phrase "to let (someone) in on (something)" means to share a secret with someone or to let someone know what is happening: "Why did you let her in on our plans?"

look

In this podcast, the word "look" means style or one's type of physical appearance: "You'll need to change your look if you want to be treated as a business professional." Or, "Do a lot of people in Texas like the cowboy look?" The phrase "to give (someone) a look" means to look at someone with a particular facial expression: "Don't give me that look! If you don't like what I'm doing, just tell me!" The phrase "to take a long, hard look" means to examine or inspect something carefully: "Shamus took a long, hard look at his life and realized he needed to make some important changes." Finally, the phrase "to not like the look of (something)" means that one thinks something bad will happen: "I don't like the look of those dark clouds. I think a bad storm is coming."



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CULTURE NOTE

Many people are “fascinated” (very interested in) by makeover TV shows where they can see before and after “shots” (photographs) or “footage” (recorded video) of an individual’s physical appearance after professional “stylists” (professionals who give advice and help someone with his or her appearance) have “had their way” (been able to do what they want).

In one show called What Not to Wear, the hosts “criticize” (say bad things about) an individual’s clothing, hair, and makeup. Then they give that person a certain amount of money to be spent on new clothes in two days. The cameras “are still rolling” (continue to record) while that person goes shopping and the hosts help him or her buy more fashionable clothes. Then professional stylists change the person’s hair and makeup, and the individual “models” (shows what the clothes look like) the new “outfits” (pieces of clothing that are designed to be worn together) for everyone to see.

Other shows, like Extreme Makeover, are more “extreme” (taking something very seriously). In that show, the participants “engage in” (becoming involved in) exercise programs, nutrition programs, and “plastic surgery” (surgery to make one more beautiful) to change their physical appearance. Friends and family members are not allowed to see the person until the end of the show, and then they are “shocked” (very surprised) by the “dramatic” (very big and involving strong emotions) transformation.

Some makeover shows aren’t for people, but instead are for homes. Many shows have professional “interior designers” (people whose job is to decorate homes) change the appearance of a single room or an entire home, usually with a “tight budget” (with a small amount of money). The owner usually isn’t allowed to see the work “in progress” (while it is happening) and instead is brought in after everything has been finished.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 679: Getting a Makeover.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 679. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

This episode, like all of our current episodes, has an 8- to 10-page Learning Guide that you can download on our website. Go to eslpod.com.

This episode is about a “makeover,” when someone tries to change their physical appearance for the better, to change it to make them look better. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Kurt: Come with me.

Ellie: Where are you taking me?

Kurt: I'm giving you a makeover and you have no say about it.

Ellie: A makeover?! I don't need a makeover.

Kurt: Yes, you do. I'm your best friend and this is an intervention. You're so busy these days that you've let yourself go.

Ellie: I haven't let myself go. I just don't spend as much time as I used to primping and getting dolled up, that's all.

Kurt: On that we agree. Your clothes are frumpy and your hairstyle is 10 years out-of-date. Come on. I'm taking you to get a new look. It'll be a complete transformation.

Ellie: Okay, I admit that my appearance needs a little updating, but I'm not giving you free rein on what changes to make.

Kurt: I'm willing to let you have some say in that – if you come quietly.

Ellie: And if I don't?



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Kurt: You're getting this makeover one way or another, even if I have to drag you kicking and screaming!

[end of dialogue]

Kurt begins by saying to Ellie, "Come with me." Ellie says, "Where are you taking me?" Kurt says, "I'm giving you a makeover and you have no say about it." A "makeover" (one word) is a service where you change your appearance, usually by changing your hair, your clothing, perhaps, especially if you're a woman, the makeup that you put on your face. It tries to improve your overall – your general appearance.

Kurt says he's going to give Ellie a makeover and she has no say about it. The expression "to have no say" (say) means that you cannot say no, you will not determine the situation, you won't determine what will happen, your opinion doesn't matter." Ellie says, "A makeover?! I don't need a makeover." Kurt says, "Yes, you do. I'm your best friend and this is an intervention." An "intervention," when used in this context, means when your close friends and/or relatives tell someone something that is very difficult for them to hear, especially if it's about a serious problems such as alcoholism or drug addiction. Kurt is using it somewhat humorously here; he's making a joke. This isn't, of course, a serious problem, but he's acting as though it were. Kurt says, "You're so busy these days (nowadays; recently) that you've let yourself go." "To let yourself go" means that you stop caring about your physical appearance; you stop worrying about whether you are beautiful or handsome. You stop trying to dress well and for a woman to look pretty. "Jacques is afraid to get married because he thinks his future wife will let herself go after the wedding is over." There are a couple of different meanings of this expression however; take a look at our Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

Ellie says, "I haven't let myself go. I just don't spend as much time as I used to (as I did in the past) primping and getting dolled up, that's all." "To primp" (primp) means to spend time in front of a mirror making small changes to your appearance – to your hair, to your makeup – so that you look more attractive, you look more beautiful. I do this every morning, of course, especially with my hair! Ellie also says that she doesn't take as much time anymore to get dolled up. "To get dolled (dolled) up" is a phrasal verb meaning to put on nice clothes, to make sure that your hair looks pretty, to try to look nice for usually a special event – a special, what we would call, "occasion." Another way of saying this is simply "to dress up." "To dress up" means to dress very nicely. In some places in the United States, Los Angeles for example, Honolulu definitely, the way that



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people dress is more informal, more relaxed, we would say more “casual.” The opposite of that would be to be dressed up, to have a suit and a tie if you’re a man, or to have a pantsuit for a woman or a nice dress. These are the ways that you can get dolled up, to be dressed up. “To get dolled up” is used more often for a woman however, as is the general term “makeover,” but not exclusively. That is, sometimes we could also describe a man as getting a makeover.

Kurt says, “On that we agree,” meaning we agree you don’t spend as much time as you used to primping and getting dolled up. Kurt says, “Your clothes are frumpy.” “Frumpy” (frumpy) refers to things that are old, wrinkled, out of style, things that are not fashionable anymore. That’s “frumpy,” not as common of a word as it once was but you’ll still hear it and read it. Kurt says, “your hairstyle is 10 years out-of-date.” “Your hairstyle (the way that you have your hair, the way you comb your hair) is 10 years out-of-date.” To be “out-of-date” means the same to be old, not modern, we might also say to be “outdated.” For example, in the 60s and 70s it was common to see men with long hair, but then in the 80s and 90s that was considered outdated by a lot of people; it was no longer fashionable, it was no longer considered modern.

Kurt says to Ellie, “Come on (meaning come with me). I’m taking you to get a new look.” The word “look,” used as a noun, means the same as “style,” it’s your type of physical appearance. If you put on a different pair of glasses and you change the color of your hair, you would have a different look – a new look, a new appearance. “Look” has a couple of other meanings in English, and those can be found in the Learning Guide. So Kurt says to Ellie that he’s going to get her a new look; he says, “It’ll be a complete transformation.” A “transformation” is a major or an important change. It’s when you change something very thoroughly or completely. So, he’s going to take her somewhere where she is going to have her physical appearance transformed. The verb is “to transform,” the noun is “transformation.”

Ellie says, “Okay, I admit (meaning I agree with you; I will tell you) that my appearance needs a little updating.” Your “appearance” is similar to your “look,” it’s the way that you look, the way that you appear to other people, the way that they see you physically. “To update” (update – one word) means to make something more modern, more appropriate for the current situation – the current time period in which you are living. Ellie says, “I’m not giving you free rein on what changes to make.” “Free rein” (rein) is the ability to do whatever you want, without being controlled or monitored by other people. You don’t need anyone’s permission to do what you’re doing.



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Ellie is not going to give Kurt free rein on the changes to make. Kurt says, “I’m willing to let you have some say in it.” Notice again we see this word “say,” in this case it means I’m going to allow you to make some decisions, to say yes or no to certain changes. Kurt says he’ll let Ellie have some say if she comes quietly. “To come quietly” means to do something without fighting against it, without protesting; to agree to do something willingly, without complaining, without saying, “Oh, I don’t want to go. I don’t want to do that.” Ellie says, “And if I don’t?” meaning and if I don’t come quietly. Kurt says, “You’re getting this makeover one way or another.” The expression “one way or another” is used to insist that someone do something when he or she does not have control over how it will be done. It’s a phrase that we use to make someone do something even if they don’t want to. “One way or another, I’m going to get my money from my brother.” He may not want to give it to me, but I am going to get it from him somehow.

Kurt says that he’s going to give Ellie this makeover one way or another, even if he have to drag her kicking and screaming. “To drag (drag) (someone) kicking and screaming” is an expression that means to force someone to do something that he or she does not want to do, to make someone do something that they don’t want to even if they complain, even if they yell loudly, which is what “screaming” is, even if they “kick,” which is to use your legs to try to hurt or injure someone else. Of course, most people don’t actually kick and scream; the idea is that even if you complain loudly you still are going to have to do this, and that’s what Kurt is telling Ellie. I’m not sure if Kurt is such a good friend here. He’s being honest with Ellie, but he also is being what may be considered rude in telling her that basically she’s ugly and she doesn’t look very good now. Not sure if Kurt and Ellie will be friends for much longer!

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

[start of dialogue]

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Ellie: And if I don't?

Kurt: You're getting this makeover one way or another, even if I have to drag you kicking and screaming!

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogues are never out-of-date, thanks to 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 on ESL Podcast.

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