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**ESL Podcast 321 – Buying a Jacket or Coat**

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**GLOSSARY**

**trench coat** – a very long coat that has large pockets and is closed with a belt

\* Trench coats are comfortable because they're big and loose.

**raincoat** – a coat made from fabric that keeps one dry when it is raining

\* When it rains, do you wear a raincoat or take an umbrella?

**overcoat** – a very warm, long coat worn over one's clothing to keep one warm in cold weather

\* When the temperature was -20 degrees, everyone wore overcoats, hats, and mittens.

**parka** – a very warm coat that has real or artificial fur (animal hair) inside

\* I wore a parka this morning, and now there are lots of little hairs on my sweater.

**denim jacket** – jean jacket; a jacket made from the same fabric that jeans are made from, with buttons in the front

\* I should have dressed more formally for the party instead of wearing a denim jacket with jeans.

**down coat** – a very warm coat that is filled with bird feathers

\* Rijah is allergic to goose feathers, so he can't wear down coats.

**collar** – on a shirt, coat, or jacket, the part of the clothing that is close one's neck and folds down

\* Put on your tie first, and then fold your shirt's collar over it.

**hood** – the part of a coat that is attached to the neck and can be pulled up to cover the back and top of one's head

\* When it started raining, I didn't have an umbrella, so I used my hood to keep my hair dry.

**cuffs** – on a shirt or coat, the part of the clothing that is at the end of the sleeves, at one's wrists

\* On hot days, Jason rolls up the cuffs on his long-sleeved shirts.

**roomy** – clothing that is loose; clothing that is not too close to one's body; clothing that gives one space to move easily

\* Francine wears roomy clothing now that she's pregnant.



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**knee-length** – clothing that hangs down to one's knees

\* Do you prefer knee-length or ankle-length skirts?

**blazer** – a jacket, similar to a suit jacket, that is worn with pants of a different color

\* He wasn't sure what to wear to the party, so he chose a pair of jeans, a nice shirt, and a blazer, so that he could take the blazer off if he wanted to be less formal.

**bum** – a homeless person; a person who doesn't have a job or a place to live, and doesn't dress nicely

\* That bum spends all day on the corner, asking people for money

**fitted** – tailored; cut and sewn to follow the shape of one's body; fitting close to the skin

\* Her dress is fitted and shows her beautiful figure.

**trimmed** – decorated with something along the edges

\* The little girl wore a pink dress trimmed with white lace.

**paisleys** – a fabric design with curved lines that look a little bit like feathers

\* Should I wear the paisley tie or this striped tie?

**to beg** – to ask someone for something in a desperate way, because it is very important to oneself

\* We begged Grandpa to go the doctor for his annual exam.

**laughing stock** – a person whom is laughed at by everyone for something that he or she has done or said

\* Clarisse was the laughing stock of the class when the other students heard her silly answer to the teacher's question.



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**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

1. Which of these would be best for cold weather?
  - a) Down coat.
  - b) Denim jacket.
  - c) Blazer.
  
2. Why does Lisa want Michael to have a coat and a blazer?
  - a) A coat will make him look like a bum, and a blazer is fitted.
  - b) A coat will keep him warm, and a blazer will keep him dry.
  - c) A coat will be for cold weather, and a blazer will be for nice places.

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**WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?**

**hood**

The word “hood,” in this podcast, means the part of a coat that is attached to the neck and can be pulled up to cover the back and top of one’s head: “Pulling up your hood can keep you warmer in cold weather.” A “hood” is also the large piece of metal at the front of a car that covers the engine: “When the car started making strange noises, we looked under the hood to see what was wrong.” At a graduation ceremony, a “hood” is the piece of colored fabric that graduate students wear, showing what degree they have earned: “The engineering graduates have blue hoods, and the English graduates have red hoods.” In informal English, a “hood” is a “neighborhood,” or an area where people live: “Shawna has a lot of friends in her ‘hood.’”

**trimmed**

In this podcast, the word “trimmed” means decorated with something along the edges: “The yellow curtains are trimmed with green and blue fabric.” The word “trimmed” is also used to mean to decorate Christmas trees: “They trimmed the Christmas tree with red and yellow lights.” The verb “to trim” means to cut, especially to make something tidier or prettier: “Where do you get your hair trimmed?” Or, “Can you please trim the plants next to the driveway this weekend?” The phrase “to trim (something) off” means to cut away something that one doesn’t want or need: “The tailor trimmed two inches off the bottom of those pants.” Or, “Please trim the fat from that chicken meat before you cook it.”



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**CULTURE NOTE**

Americans wear many other types of jackets and coats that weren't mentioned in the script for this podcast. "Leather jackets" are expensive, dark brown or black jackets made from "leather" (cow skin). A "motorcycle jacket" is a type of leather jacket that is worn by people who ride motorcycles, and usually has "chains" (connected metal rings) attached to it.

A "life jacket" is actually a "vest" (a piece of clothing with no sleeves) that is filled with air or another material and is usually bright orange. People wear life jackets while they are on boats, so that they won't "drown" (die in the water) if they fall into the water.

A "straightjacket" is used to make it impossible for people to hurt themselves. Straightjackets have very long sleeves that are wrapped around the body and tied in the back, so that the person wearing the straightjacket cannot move his or her arms.

Scientists wear "lab coats" when they work in their "labs," or "laboratories" (rooms where scientists do research). Lab coats are usually long, white coats that protect the scientists from getting chemicals on their skin.

A "pea coat" is a heavy, "wool" (made from the sheep hair) coat, often dark blue and with many buttons on the front. Pea coats used to be worn by British and American "sailors" (men who work in the navy).

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



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**COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT**

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 321: Buying a Jacket or Coat.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 321. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Visit our website at [eslpod.com](http://eslpod.com). You can take a look at our premium courses, courses on business and daily English to help you learn English even faster.

In this episode we're going to go shopping. We're going to buy a jacket or a coat, and discuss the vocabulary related to those items. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Michael: Mom, I don't need a new coat. I like my old trench coat. It's comfortable, and I can use it as a raincoat and an overcoat. So what do I need a new coat for?

Lisa: If you're going to visit your aunt in Maine, you'll need something warmer than a trench coat. This parka is nice.

Michael: I'm not wearing a parka. If I'm not warm enough, I'll wear my denim jacket under my trench coat.

Lisa: That's ridiculous. You can't wear a jacket and a coat each time you go outside. Look, this down coat will keep you nice and warm. It has a high collar, a hood, and thick cuffs, and it's very roomy so you'll be very comfortable in it.

Michael: It's too long. I don't need a knee-length coat.

Lisa: Yes, you do. You've never been in really cold weather and when you get there, you'll be thankful to have something so warm. Now, we also need to buy you a blazer.

Michael: A blazer? What for?

Lisa: Your aunt is probably going to take you to some nice places and I don't want you to look like a bum. See? This one is nice and fitted.



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Michael: It's trimmed with flowers!

Lisa: Those aren't flowers. They're paisleys. You'll look very nice in it.

Michael: Please, Mom, don't make me wear that. I'm begging you.

Lisa: You'll look like a nice young man in this coat and blazer.

Michael: I'll be the laughing stock of the entire State of Maine.

Lisa: No you won't. Now, we need to buy you some new underwear.

Michael: Mom! Shhh! Not so loud. This is so embarrassing!

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue between Michael and Lisa, his mother, begins by Michael saying, "Mom, I don't need a new coat. I like my old trench coat." A "trench (trench) coat" is a very long coat that has large pockets. It is usually one that also has a belt around it, so you tie the belt to close the trench coat. Trench coats are not very popular anymore; they were more popular back in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There was a famous TV show about a police detective named "Columbo," and he wore a trench coat.

Michael has a trench coat and he doesn't want to get a new one. He says, "It's comfortable, and I can use it as a raincoat and an overcoat." A "raincoat" (raincoat – one word) is a coat that is made to keep you dry when it is raining. So, the material – what we would call the "fabric" of the coat – has some plastic or something on it that makes the rain roll off of it easily. An "overcoat" (again, one word) is a very large, warm coat that you wear in the wintertime when it's very cold. So, a raincoat is something you might wear, for example, in London, where it's always or often raining. An overcoat is something you would wear where it was very cold, such as in Minnesota.

Michael asks, "So what do I need a new coat for?" "So what do I need a new coat for" is the same as "why do I need a new coat." We often use "what for" informally to mean "why." Notice we put the "for" at the end of the question – "What are you doing that for?" If you just want to say "why," you would say "what for." "I'm going to the store," your wife says, "What for?" – why are you going, or what are you going to the store for. Those are all the same.



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So, Lisa responds (Michael’s mother) by saying, “If you’re going to visit your aunt in Maine, you’ll need something warmer than a trench coat. This parka is nice.” Maine is a state that is located in the northeast corner of the United States, where it can get cold in the winter. Michael’s mother, Lisa, says he should get a parka (parka). A “parka,” is a very warm coat that has either a real or artificial – fake – fur inside. “Fur” is the hair of an animal. Usually now, these are not real furs – real hairs, or skin and hair from an animal, they’re just artificial, or fake. A parka usually has a very big, what we would call a “hood,” which is the part of the coat that you can pull up and put over the top of your head. A parka has fur along the edge of the hood.

Michael says, “I’m not wearing a parka. If I’m not warm enough, I’ll wear my denim jacket under my trench coat.” A “denim (denim) jacket” is a jacket made from a material – a type of fabric called “denim.” We also use denim to make jeans, which is why a denim jacket is sometimes called a “jean jacket.” So a “jean jacket,” or a “denim jacket” is what Michael wants to use to keep warm. Of course, a denim jacket is not usually very warm.

Lisa says, “That’s ridiculous. You can’t wear a jacket and a coat each time you go outside.” Notice that the word “jacket” and “coat” are sometimes used to mean the same thing. Sometimes a jacket, however, is used to mean a very light coat or thin coat, and a coat is something thicker or warmer – not always, however.

Lisa says, “Look, this down coat will keep you nice and warm.” “Down” is a kind of material that you put in a coat to make it warmer. It’s actually bird feathers – the feathers of birds that are put into the coat in order to make it warmer. Lisa says the coat “has a high collar.” A “collar” on a shirt, a coat, or a jacket is the part that goes around your neck, and usually folds down. So, “It has a high collar, a hood,” which you know is the part of the coat that is attached to the neck and you can put over your head, and thick cuffs.” The coat has “thick cuffs” (cuffs). The “cuff” of a shirt or a coat is the part that is at the end of the arm – end of what we would call the “sleeves” of the coat. The “sleeves” are the places where you put your arm, and at the end of each sleeve, where your wrist is – next to your hand – there is the cuff of the shirt or the cuff of the coat.

Lisa says the parka is “very roomy (roomy – meaning it has a lot of room inside, it’s very loose fitting) so you’ll be comfortable in it.” Michael says, “It’s too long. I don’t want a knee-length coat.” A “knee-length” would be some clothing like a coat that goes down to your knees. Lisa says, “Yes, you do.” Remember, Lisa is his mother. She says, “You’ve never been in really cold weather and when you get there, you’ll be thankful to have something warm.” She’s saying when you



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get to Maine where it's cold, you'll be happy you have something so warm as a parka. For a teenager, of course, a parka is not necessarily something that is fashionable – that looks attractive on you – so many teenagers who live in cold parts of the country don't wear very warm coats. This was true when I was in high school; many of the kids would not wear warm coats because they didn't look "cool," meaning they didn't look fashionable – they didn't look nice. Now, of course, I wear a warm coat because I don't care about how it looks, as long as I am warm.

Lisa says to Michael, "Now, we need to buy you a blazer." A "blazer" (blazer) is a kind of jacket very similar to a suit jacket, like you would wear with a formal suit for a man. A blazer is worn with pants of a different color. That would be a "blazer," a type of jacket. You can have a blazer for a man or a woman. A blazer for a man, especially a teenager, is sort of old-fashioned; it's not very current, it doesn't look cool for many kids.

Michael says, "A blazer? What for?" meaning why. Lisa says, "Your aunt is probably going to take you to some nice places (like a restaurant) and I don't want you to look like a bum." A "bum" (bum) in American English is a homeless person, someone who doesn't have a job or a place to live. It's not a very nice term; it's not a very nice way to describe someone. It's somewhat insulting. Your "bum" in British English is what we call in American English your "butt" – your "behind." What you sit on, that would be your "bum" in British English, but in American English, "bum" means a homeless person.

Lisa says, "This one (this blazer) is nice and fitted." When we say something is "fitted" (fitted), we mean that it is cut so that it goes very well on your body – it fits very close to your skin.

Michael says, "It's trimmed with flowers!" To "trim" something is to decorate something along the edges. This particular blazer, along the edges – along the sides of the jacket – has flowers on it. Obviously, a teenage boy will not want to wear something with flowers on it, usually. Lisa says, "Those aren't flowers. They're paisleys." "Paisleys" refers to a design of fabric that looks a little like flowers – they aren't exactly flowers, but they look like flowers.

Michael says, "Please, Mom, don't make me wear that. I'm begging you." To "beg" is to ask for something usually in a desperate way, meaning you really want this thing – "I'm begging you." Lisa says, "You'll look like a nice young man in this coat and blazer." Michael responds, "I'll be the laughing stock of the entire State of Maine." The "laughing stock" (stock) is the person that every one laughs at because of something they have done or said. To be the "laughing stock"





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means everyone will laugh at you, and that is what Michael is saying. His mother says, “No you won’t. Now, we need to buy you some new underwear.” Michael says, “Mom! Shhh (be quiet)! Not so loud. This is so embarrassing!” Teenagers are often embarrassed by their parents.

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

[start of dialogue]

Michael: Mom, I don’t need a new coat. I like my old trench coat. It’s comfortable, and I can use it as a raincoat and an overcoat. So what do I need a new coat for?

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[end of dialogue]

The script for this episode was written by Dr. Lucy Tse.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thanks for listening. We'll see you next time on ESL Podcast.

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