



ESL Podcast 399 – A Bachelor Party

GLOSSARY

best man – the man who helps the groom get ready for the wedding and who stands next to the groom during a wedding, usually the groom’s best friend
* Kevin asked his younger brother to be his best man.

up to (someone) – depending on someone; someone’s responsibility; someone’s decision
* Last year, I decided to take the family to Puerto Rico for our vacation, so this year it’s up to my husband.

bachelor party – a party the night before a man gets married where only men are invited that usually involves a lot of alcohol and perhaps women
* Lucienne asked her fiancé to make sure things didn’t get too wild at his bachelor party.

groomsmen – the men who stand behind the groom and the best man during a wedding, usually the groom’s closest friends
* Xavier’s groomsmen all wore gray suits with a yellow flower in their lapels.

to chip in – to give some money to help to pay for something
* Everyone at the office is chipping in to buy Samantha a stroller for her new baby.

to go all out – to do something as much as possible, or in as big a way as possible, with no limits
* They went all out decorating their home, buying the best of everything, no matter how expensive it was.

strip club – a business where people (usually women) dance while taking off their clothes, sometimes until they are completely naked
* Dana didn’t want to tell her parents that she worked at a strip club to make money to pay for school.

stripper – a person who takes off his or her clothes for money, usually while dancing to music
* Have you ever seen a stripper dance?

drinking game – a game that forces people to drink a lot of alcohol so that they get drunk quickly
* If you’re going to play drinking games, make sure you get everyone’s keys first so that no one can drive home drunk.



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gag gift – something that is given to another person as a joke to make him or her laugh

* The teenager wanted a Porsche, so his father gave him a small toy car as a gag gift for his birthday.

bombed – drunk; completely under the influence of alcohol

* Frankie drank six beers in just one hour and he was bombed for the rest of the evening.

hangover – a big, painful headache the morning after one has drunk too much alcohol

* I wish I hadn't drunk so much alcohol last night because I have a horrible hangover this morning.

lap dance – a “dance” where a woman who is wearing very little clothing sits on a man's legs while he is sitting in a chair and moves in a way that is sexually exciting

* How much money did you give that woman so that she would give you a lap dance?

up close – near to something or someone, without very much distance between oneself and another person or thing

* He thought the vase was new, but when he looked up close he could see where some broken pieces had been glued together.

the shock of (one's) life – a very big surprise; something that is very unexpected

* When Julian's parents told him that he was adopted, it was the shock of his life.

incriminating – showing that one did something bad or illegal; showing that one is guilty of something

* The incriminating videotape showed the face of the man who robbed the bank.

evidence – something that proves that one did something bad or illegal or committed a crime

* The police still haven't found any evidence to help them learn who killed the young woman.

to poke fun at (someone) – to make fun of someone; to tease someone; to laugh at someone

* The children were poking fun at their new classmate until the teacher told them to stop.



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mission accomplished – a phrase used to show that one has finished a project or job, especially if it was difficult or took a lot of time

* I finally finished writing the essay that's due tomorrow. Mission accomplished!

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who paid for the bachelor party?
 - a) The best man.
 - b) The groomsmen.
 - c) Everyone.
 2. Which of these might you see at a strip club?
 - a) A gag gift.
 - b) A hangover.
 - c) A lap dance.
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WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

to chip in

The phrase “to chip in,” in this podcast, means to give some money to help to pay for something: “How much did you chip in for the office Christmas party?” The phrase “to chip in” can also mean to help someone do something: “I wish you would chip in around the house more, helping me wash the dishes and do the laundry.” The phrase “a chip off the old block” is used to talk about a son or daughter who is very similar to a parent: “Randall is a chip off the old block. He loves going fishing just like his father.” Finally, the phrase “to have a chip on (one’s) shoulder” means to have a bad attitude or not trust someone because of something bad that happened in the past: “She’s had a chip on her shoulder for years because the company didn’t give her the vice-presidency.”

bombed

In this podcast, the word “bombed” means drunk or under the influence of alcohol: “There was so much alcohol at the party that almost everyone got bombed.” Normally a “bomb” is a weapon that is dropped from the air and explodes when it hits something: “They are dropping bombs on the government buildings.” The phrase “to be a bomb” means to go very badly, or to be disappointing or not successful: “The ballet was such a bomb that almost all the



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audience members left before it was finished.” Finally, the phrase “to be the bomb” is a very informal way to say that something is very good, new, interesting, and exciting: “That dance club is the bomb! We love going there on Friday nights.”

CULTURE NOTE

Bachelor parties used to be wild and crazy parties where men said goodbye to “bachelorhood” (the time in a man’s life before he gets married) by drinking too much and watching naked women dance. Bachelor parties are supposed to be a lot of fun for the groom, but traditional parties often made the “fiancée” (the woman whom one is supposed to marry) angry when she learned what really happened there, especially if she learned that her husband had kissed another woman – or worse.

Today, many bachelor parties are calmer events where the man simply has fun with his friends without getting into trouble with his fiancée. Bachelor parties aren’t always “held” (happen) at bars. Some men choose to have their bachelor parties in a restaurant or at a sports game. Other bachelor parties “stretch out” (become longer) over a whole weekend, with groups of men going “camping” (sleeping outside in natural areas), fishing, or boating. Some men enjoy going to “casinos” (places where people play games for money) for their bachelor parties while other men prefer to play “paintball” (a game where people shoot balls of paint at other people from toys that look like guns).

“Nowadays” (in modern times) many women are having bachelorette parties. Some women enjoy going to bars and hiring male strippers, much like traditional bachelor parties. However, many women are choosing “milder” (less wild and crazy) bachelorette parties. For example, the women might all go to a salon to have their hair and makeup done together. Some other bachelorette parties involve going to a “cabin” (a house in a natural area far from a city) for the weekend.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 399: A Bachelor Party.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 399. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is eslpod.com. On it, you can find a Learning Guide for this episode to help you improve your English even faster.

This episode is called "A Bachelor Party." A "bachelor party" is a party for a man who is about to be married. Usually it is a party that is organized by his friends. Let's get started.

[start of story]

My best friend, Saul, is getting married. As the best man, it was up to me to plan a bachelor party he'd never forget. All of the groomsmen were chipping in, so we went all out.

I invited everybody over to my apartment. Instead of going to a strip club, we hired a stripper. Before the stripper arrived, we played some drinking games and we gave Saul some gag gifts. We all started to get pretty bombed, but we weren't thinking of the hangover we'd have the next day.

When the stripper arrived, we told "her" to give Saul a lap dance. He had never had one before and he was really embarrassed! But the best part was when Saul saw the stripper: It was a man! Everyone had a good laugh, and we took some pictures so we'd have incriminating evidence. We poked fun at him for the rest of the night.

And as best man, what was my most important job of all? It was not letting his fiancée find out what happened that night – at least not before the wedding!

[end of story]

Our story today is about a bachelor party. Not every man who gets married has a bachelor party; I did not have a bachelor party the night before I got married. I just went to dinner with some old friends of mine – male friends from Minnesota, who had flown to Los Angeles for my wedding. But some people have bachelor



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parties, and the reputation of a bachelor party is that there's a lot of drinking, a lot of things going on that the wife might not be very happy about, or at least the bride who is getting married – the woman. Bachelor parties are traditionally just for men.

In this case, the story talks about how his best friend, Saul, is getting married. "As the best man, it was up to me to plan a bachelor party he'd never forget." The "best man" in a wedding is the man who helps the groom get ready. It's basically, however, just the person who stands next to the groom; usually it's one of the best friends or a brother of the man getting married. A bachelor party, as we said, is a party for a man usually, or again, traditionally, on the night before he gets married of. It's his last night of being a bachelor. A "bachelor" is a man who is not married – at least not yet.

The narrator of our story says, "It was up to me to plan the party." When we say something is "up to you," or "up to me," or "up to him," it means it depends on me; it's my responsibility, it's my decision. Your wife may say to you, "Do you want to go to have Italian food or Chinese food tonight?" and you say, "It's up to you, my love. It's your decision." That's what I always say to my wife, "It's up to you, dear!"

"All of the groomsmen were chipping in, so we went all out," he says. The "groomsmen" are the other men who are in what we would call the "wedding party," the group of people who stand with the bride and groom, usually at the front of the church, or the front of the synagogue or temple, or just the place where they are getting married. Not every wedding has groomsmen, or at least not every wedding has more than one. I had my brother as my best man, but I did not have any groomsmen. However, it depends on the wedding, and how big the wedding is – how many people are there. Some weddings have lots of groomsmen.

In this case, the groomsmen "chipped in." To "chip in" is a two-word phrasal verb meaning to give money to help pay for something. Usually it's what a group of people will do; they're buying a gift for someone in their office, everyone will chip in five dollars. Everyone will donate, or give money, for this common gift. In this case, the groomsmen were chipping in to pay for the party. Because they had money, they "went all out." The expression "to go all out" means to do something as much as possible, or in as big a way as possible: "I'm going to go all out when I celebrate my 20th wedding anniversary" – I'm going to have a big party, there's going to be food and music, the Beatles are going to be there. It's going to be huge – I'm going to go all out.



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“I invited everybody over to my apartment,” the story continues. “Instead of going to a strip club, we hired a stripper.” A “strip (strip) club” is a business where people, usually women, dance while take off their clothes, sometimes until they have no more clothing on. The men are sitting and watching. Usually a strip club is a bar, or serves alcohol. Strip clubs are traditional places for someone to have their bachelor party, but I don’t think it is as common as it was, perhaps, 30 or 40 years ago. I don’t really know; I don’t go to those kinds of clubs – those kinds of places! A “stripper” is the person – again, usually a woman – who takes off her clothes for money while dancing to music.

So, in this story they hired a stripper – or at least, that’s the way it seems from the story at the beginning. “Before the stripper arrived, we played some drinking games and we gave Saul some gag gifts.” A “drinking game” is a game where everyone has to take a drink of alcohol depending on what happens in the game. So for example, when I was younger and would go to a bar with my friends, a popular drinking game would be “quarters.” You would put the quarter on your nose and let it drop, and the idea was that it had to bounce, or go up into the alcohol. And if it did that, you took a drink or everyone else in your group took a drink. There are lots of different drinking games; I don’t play any of them, at least not anymore! A “gag (gag) gift” is also very popular at a bachelor party; it’s something you give another person as a joke to make them laugh. So, it’s not a real gift. If your son or daughter asks you for a new car, and you say, “Okay, sure!” and you give them a little, small, toy car; that would be a “gag gift.” It may not make them laugh, but you would certainly laugh!

“We all started to get pretty bombed,” the story says, “but we weren’t thinking of the hangover we’d have the next day.” To “get bombed” means to get drunk, to drink too much alcohol. “Bomb” has a couple of different meanings in English; take a look at our Learning Guide for some additional explanations.

So, the person in the story and his friends were drinking a lot; they weren’t thinking of the hangover they’d have the next day. A “hangover” (hangover – one word) is a very painful headache the morning after you have been doing a lot of, or too much, drinking. If you drink too much alcohol, the next morning, you may know, can sometimes be a little unpleasant; your head hurts, for example – you have a headache.

“When the stripper arrived, we told ‘her’ to give Saul a lap dance.” So, the stripper comes to the party, and her job is to entertain these men by taking off her clothes. They told her to give Saul a “lap dance.” Your “lap” (lap) is what you have when you sit down; the top of your legs, that’s called your “lap.” A “lap dance” is when a – usually, again – woman, who’s wearing very little clothing,



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would sit on your legs and move in a sexual way. Not actually having sex, but trying to get the man excited; that's a "lap dance." Again, no personal experience with that!

"He had never had one before," his friend Saul had never had a lap dance before, "and he was really embarrassed!" I would be, too! "But the best part was when Saul saw the stripper." Remember, the stripper is, at a bachelor party, going to be a woman, that's who you would expect. But this stripper was a man; it was a joke that they were playing on – a joke that they made for Saul. It wasn't a woman; it was a man dressed as a woman. "Everybody had a good laugh, and we took some pictures so we'd have incriminating evidence." "Evidence" is proof; something that proves you did something. It could be good; it could be bad. "Incriminating evidence" is evidence that shows you did something wrong, something bad, something illegal perhaps. In this case, the pictures of the male stripper with Saul aren't actually incriminating in a legal way; they're being used here to show other people that Saul was part of this joke. He says, "We poked fun at Saul for the rest of the night." To "poke fun" at someone means to make fun of someone, to laugh at someone.

The story ends by the narrator saying, "And as best man, what was my most important job of all? It was not letting Saul's fiancée find out what happened that night – at least not before the wedding!" Your "fiancée," or "fiancé," is the person that you are marrying. If there are two "e"s at the end of the word, it's the woman that the man is marrying, and if there's just one "e," it's the man that, traditionally, the woman is marrying.

Now let's listen to the story, this time at a normal speed.

[start of story]

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And as best man, what was my most important job of all? It was not letting his fiancée find out what happened that night – at least not before the wedding!

[end of story]

The script for this episode is by Dr. Lucy Tse, who will never be incriminated!

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

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