



GLOSSARY

to train – to teach someone or a pet to do something through close interaction and repetition

* How long did it take you to train your dog to shake hands?

trick – something that an animal can be taught to do, such as sit or roll over

* Can a pet rabbit learn any tricks?

to lie – to be in a resting, horizontal position; not standing

* Jake lies on the couch for a few minutes each evening when he comes home from work.

to feed – to give food to an animal or person

* Did you remember to feed the goldfish this morning?

treat – a special food that tastes good, is often sweet, and often given as a reward for having done something well

* The best way to teach a dog to sit is to give it a treat each time it does it.

bowl – a small container with rounded sides and an open top, used to hold a liquid or small pieces of a solid

* The cat comes running as soon as it hears us pour food into its bowl.

collar – a piece of leather or cloth put around an animal's neck, usually with a tag that has identifying information

* Our cat loves it when people scratch her neck under her collar.

leash – a long piece of leather or fabric where one end is attached to an animal's collar (piece of leather or cloth around an animal's neck) and the other end is held in a person's hand to control where the animal goes

* People aren't allowed to bring animals to the park unless they use a leash.

carrier – a box or cage used to hold an animal while it is transported

* Their dog cries whenever they put it in the carrier.

to groom – to clean and/or wash an animal, especially to brush its fur (hair)

* Long-haired dogs require more grooming than short-haired dogs.



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flea – a small insect that lives at the base of hair and bites the skin, causing the person or animal to scratch the bites

* Our dog brought fleas into the house, and now I don't know how to get rid of them.

tick – a small insect that enters the skin of a person or animal and lives under the skin, drinking blood

* After hiking, it's a good idea to check your arms and legs for ticks.

vet – veterinarian; a person whose job is to provide medical care for animals; a doctor for animals

* The vet says our horse is pregnant.

checkup – a medical exam that happens regularly, often once a year, to assess one's health

* Next week, Charlene has her annual checkup when her doctor will check her weight, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.

pet rock – a rock with two eyes glued onto it, sold with a paper carrier and an instruction book, very popular in the 1970s

* Why would anyone pay money for a pet rock?

what's your point? – a question used to ask another person to explain his or her intentions or meaning, often used defensively when one feels criticized or judged by that other person

* A: Wow, that dress is really short.

B: What's your point?



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of these things is worn by a pet?
 - a) A treat.
 - b) A collar.
 - c) A carrier.

2. What is Tony planning to do with his pet later?
 - a) He plans to train it to do tricks.
 - b) He plans to play with it.
 - c) He plans to clean or wash it.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

treat

The word “treat,” in this podcast, means a special food that tastes good, is often sweet, and often given as a reward for having done something well: “Do you think it’s a good idea to give kids treats for doing chores?” The phrase “(one’s) treat” indicates that one has offered to pay for something, especially when talking about food or drink at a restaurant: “Order whatever you want. It’s my treat.” The word can also be used as a verb with a similar meaning: “Thank you for treating me to dinner last night. It was really delicious.” Finally, the phrase “trick or treat” is used on Halloween, when children dress in costumes and knock on doors, saying that phrase to ask for candy.

carrier

In this podcast, the word “carrier” means a box or cage used to hold an animal while it is transported: “Your dog can fly in the airplane if it stays in a carrier that fits under the seat in front of you.” A “carrier” is also any object used to carry something else: “Does that baby carrier make your back hurt?” When talking about health, a “carrier” is someone who does not feel sick, but is infected and spreads germs to other people: “The disease spread quickly because carriers who didn’t feel any symptoms returned to their hometowns and resumed their normal activities.” Finally, a “carrier” can be a company that provides cell phone service: “Which carrier has the best coverage in rural areas?”



CULTURE NOTE

The Humane Society

The Humane Society of the United States is a large nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C. “Founded” (established; created) in 1954, its mission is to “celebrate” (enjoy and be happy about) animals and “confront” (fight against and stop) “cruelty” (mean, unfair, and harmful treatment). The organization and its supporters try to protect animals through “advocacy” (trying to change laws) and “campaigns” (efforts to raise awareness and change how people think about something).

The Humane Society provides animal “rescue” (the act of saving a person or animal from a dangerous situation) and emergency response. The organization has “sanctuaries” (safe and protected areas for animals) and “wildlife rehabilitation centers,” where people try to help “wild” (not domesticated; not pets) animals that have been injured, so that they can live in “the wild” (nature) again.

The organization “investigates” (researches) reports of animal “abuse” (mistreatment; harm). For example, in 2012 it rescued “exotic” (unusual and from far away) animals from a “squalid” (dirty and in very poor condition) zoo. The organization often rescues dogs from a “puppy mill” (a place that “breeds” (makes an animal reproduce) valuable dogs to make money, but does not treat the animals well). In addition, the organization tries to improve how animals are “kept” (taken care of) on farms, making sure that animals have enough room to move around comfortably before they are killed for “consumption” (to be eaten by humans).

Many communities have local “humane societies” that “take in” (take care of) “abandoned” (left without a home) animals and help people adopt the animals as pets. These local humane societies are not part of the Humane Society of the United States, but they may receive training and education from the national organization.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 789: Taking Care of Pets.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 789. 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. You probably know that. You probably also know you can download a Learning Guide for this episode that contains all of the vocabulary, definitions, sample sentences, additional definitions, culture notes, comprehension questions – but wait, there's more, a complete transcript of everything we say on this episode.

This episode is about taking care of pets. "Pets" are things like dogs and cats, animals that people have in their house – for some weird reason. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Magda: Oooh, he's so cute. When did you get him?

Tony: Yesterday. I'm training him to do tricks.

Magda: Really? Are you having any luck?

Tony: No, not yet. So far, he just lies there, but maybe he's hungry and doesn't have any energy to play. I'm going to feed him a few treats and give him some water in his bowl.

Magda: Uh, okay.

Tony: And then later, I'm going to take him for a walk. Here are the new collar and leash I bought for him. I'll be sure to bring his carrier in case he gets too tired to walk.

Magda: Whatever you say. Are you sure you need to do all that?

Tony: Oh, sure. It's important to keep pets healthy and happy, don't you think? I'm going to groom him later. I wouldn't want him to get fleas or ticks. Maybe I should take him to see the vet for a checkup.



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Magda: I really don't think that'll be necessary. Tony, you do know that that's a pet rock, right?

Tony: Yeah, what's your point?

[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue is about taking care of pets, and you know I love pets. Love, love, love the pets; can't have enough of them! Well, this is about pets. It's a dialogue that begins with Magda saying, "Oooh, he's so cute." "He's so cute," he's so good looking, he's nice to look at. Magda says, "When did you get him?" Tony says, "Yesterday. I'm training him to do tricks." "To train" (train) means to teach someone or to teach a pet to do something special. For example, when you clap your hands the dog jumps up, or when you say "newspaper" the dog goes over to the newspaper, picks it up, and brings it back to you. That's what dogs used to do when people had newspapers! "To train," then, means to educate if it's a human being, or to teach somehow if it's an animal to do tricks. A "trick" is anything an animal can be trained to do, such as sit, or stand up, or get your newspaper, make your coffee – that would be a great trick!

Magda says, "Really? Are you having any luck?" meaning have you been successful. Is it working? Tony says, "No, not yet. So far, he just lies there." "To lie" (lie) does not mean here to not tell the truth, that can be "to lie," instead it means to be in a resting, horizontal position; it's the opposite of standing – well, sort of. When you stand you're completely vertical; when you lie, or lie down, you are completely horizontal. If you're sitting, you're mostly vertical but, of course, your legs are horizontal.

Anyway, Tony says his pet is just lying there, "but maybe he's hungry and doesn't have any energy to play. I'm going to feed him a few treats and give him some water in his bowl." "To feed" (feed) means to give food to someone; could be a person, could be an animal. Tony says he's going to feed his pet a few treats (treats). A "treat" is a special food that tastes good; often it's sweet, often it's a reward for doing something well or for accomplishing something. A treat can be given to a person or it could be given to an animal. Tony says he's going to give his pet some water in his bowl (bowl). A "bowl" is a small, round dish that holds liquid, such as water, for, say, a dog. I should mention that "treat" has a couple of other meanings as well, those can be found in our wonderful Learning Guide.



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Magda says, “Oh, okay.” Tony says, “And then later (later on), I’m going to take him for a walk.” He’s going to take his pet for a walk; they’re going to walk together. He says, “Here are the new collar and leash I bought for him.” A “collar” (collar) is a piece of leather or cloth that goes around the neck of an animal; usually it has some sort of information on it that says to whom the animal belongs, what we would call a “tag” (tag). A “leash” (leash) is a long piece of leather or some sort of cloth that you use to attach to the collar, and you hold it in one hand, and that’s how you control the animal, make sure the animal doesn’t run away from you. You hold the animal with the leash, attached to the collar around his neck. Tony says, “I’ll be sure to bring his carrier in case he gets too tired to walk.” A “carrier” (carrier) here means a box or a cage used to carry an animal. For example, if you are going to be flying on a plane and you want to bring your cat, you could put your cat in a carrier, and then you would put the cat – well, I don’t know where you’d put the cat – under your seat, up above in the storage compartment – just nowhere near my seat, please!

Magda says, “Whatever you say. Are you sure you need to do all that?” Do you really need to do all of the things you are planning on doing? Tony says, “Oh, sure. It’s important to keep pets healthy and happy, don’t you think (meaning don’t you agree with me)? I’m going to groom him later on.” “To groom” (groom) means to clean or wash an animal, often using a special tool called a “brush,” just like you brush your hair with the small tool that keeps your hair straight. I use a brush every day. To brush an animal would be to use that same tool to make sure the animal looks nice – the hair on the animal looks nice. People groom their dogs and their cats, I guess.

Tony grooms his pet because he doesn’t want it to get fleas or ticks. “Fleas” (fleas) are small insects that live at the base of the hair of an animal. They can bite the skin. It could also be on a human being, but normally we associate fleas with dogs for example, or other animals. “Ticks” (ticks) is also a small insect that actually can go inside of the skin; both humans and animals can get ticks, especially if they are outside in certain parts of the country where there are a lot of trees. We used to get ticks back in Minnesota, not here in California. I’m sure there are some ticks somewhere, but fortunately the pollution of Los Angeles kills most animals, and so we don’t have that problem. I’m just kidding, it doesn’t actually kill most animals. Didn’t kill me, not yet!

Tony says, “Maybe I should take him to see the vet for a checkup.” He wants to take his pet to the vet (vet). “Vet” is short for “veterinarian,” which is basically an animal doctor, someone who gives medical care to animals; we call that person a “vet.” It’s sort of confusing because a “vet” can also be a “veteran,” someone who has fought in a war. So, if you are a doctor for animals who fought in the



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war, then you're a "vet vet," I guess. I'm just kidding. It's true, though, that "vet" can mean "veteran," and "vet" can be an animal doctor. A "checkup" (checkup) is a medical exam. Many doctors say you should have a checkup every year; you should go to your doctor, and your doctor checks your blood pressure and takes some tests. That's a checkup, to make sure there's nothing wrong with you, because, of course, sometimes you can be sick and not know it.

Magda says, "I really don't think that will be necessary." She doesn't think it will be necessary to take Tony's pet to the vet. She says, "Tony, you do know that that's a pet rock, right?" She's saying to Tony do you understand that this pet is actually a pet rock. A "pet rock" is a little rock – a little stone that has two eyes glued on it. It was sold back in the 1970s; it was very popular in the 1970s, as sort of a joke gift people would buy these pet rocks. It was a completely stupid, idiotic, ridiculous idea, and of course that's why it sold millions and millions of dollars. So if you don't know what a pet rock is, it's what it sounds like. It's a rock, it's a piece of stone; it's not an animal, it's not alive. But people bought these pet rocks, I don't know why; I didn't buy one.

Tony says, "Yeah, what's your point?" So in other words, we've been hearing Tony talking about taking care of his pet – feeding it, taking it for a walk – when at the end of the dialogue we find out it's not an animal at all, it's just a rock. But Tony feels a little insulted, perhaps, by Magda's question. He says, "Yeah, what's your point?" "What's your point?" is a question we use when we are asking the other person to explain what they mean. Often we use this when we feel we're being criticized. When someone is saying something negative about us we may say, "What's your point?" meaning I don't understand. Why are you saying that? You're asking for them to explain more of why they are saying what they are saying, especially if it's something negative about you.

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

[start of dialogue]

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Tony: Yesterday. I'm training him to do tricks.

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Tony: No, not yet. So far, he just lies there, but maybe he's hungry and doesn't have any energy to play. I'm going to feed him a few treats and give him some water in his bowl.



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Magda: Uh, okay.

Tony: And then later, I'm going to take him for a walk. Here are the new collar and leash I bought for him. I'll be sure to bring his carrier in case he gets too tired to walk.

Magda: Whatever you say. Are you sure you need to do all that?

Tony: Oh, sure. It's important to keep pets healthy and happy, don't you think? I'm going to groom him later. I wouldn't want him to get fleas or ticks. Maybe I should take him to see the vet for a checkup.

Magda: I really don't think that'll be necessary. Tony, you do know that that's a pet rock, right?

Tony: Yeah, what's your point?

[end of dialogue]

Our scriptwriter needs no training. That's because we have the wonderful Dr. Lucy Tse. Thank you, Lucy.

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

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