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## ESL Podcast 1057 – Storing Food

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### GLOSSARY

**leftovers** – food that was not eaten when it was first served, but that is stored so that it can be eaten later

\* I thought we would have some leftovers, but the kids were really hungry and they ate everything!

**to store** – to keep something for future use; to put away something for later

\* During the summer, they store their winter clothes in boxes in the basement.

**container** – a box that is used to store something, especially a plastic container used for storing food and small objects

\* They took some containers and went to pick blackberries at the park.

**to go to waste** – to become ruined before something has been fully used, especially referring to food that has spoiled

\* Please pick our apples while we're traveling. Otherwise they'll just go to waste.

**plastic** – a material made from “derivatives” (things made from something else) of oil, either soft and flexible or hard and “rigid” (not moving)

\* Do you use plastic, paper, or cloth bags at the grocery store?

**sandwich bag** – a small plastic bag, with or without a zipper, used to store and transport a sandwich or other small food items

\* Parents often have a sandwich bag filled with fruit or crackers in case their children get hungry.

**wax paper** – paper that has a layer of wax (the substance used to make candles) on one or both sides, often used in baking so that things do not stick to each other

\* That pan will be a lot easier to clean if you put wax paper down before putting in the food.

**to wrap up** – to package something, especially for transportation or for future use

\* Please wrap up the dishes carefully so that they don't break during the move.

**Saran wrap** – a thin, clear piece of plastic that sticks to itself and to many other surfaces, often used to package food, especially when placed over the top of a bowl that does not have a lid

\* Please put some Saran wrap on top of that cut watermelon so it doesn't get dried out in the fridge.



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**aluminum foil** – a very thin, flexible sheet of silver-colored metal that tears easily, often used to package food temporarily

\* Bakers sometimes put a small piece of aluminum foil around the edges of a pie so that they don't burn in the oven.

**freezer bag** – a clear, flat plastic bag with a zipper on one side, used to store and protect food in the freezer by preventing air and moisture (water) from getting inside

\* Each summer, they buy pounds of blueberries and put them in freezer bags until they're ready to eat them in the winter.

**might as well** – a phrase used to suggest doing something, or agreeing to another person's suggestion, without very much excitement or enthusiasm

\* If we don't have any plans for the weekend, we might as well clean out the garage.

**to vacuum seal** – to remove all the air from a package before closing it so that the items on the inside remain fresh and do not spoil

\* They bought special equipment to vacuum seal their smoked salmon.

**in one sitting** – at once; at one time; without getting up or taking a break

\* The book was so good that I read it in one sitting.

**waistline** – an imaginary line around the narrow part of one's torso (the part of the body minus the head, arms, and legs), especially when talking about its measurement and how fat or thin a person is

\* If you follow this diet and exercise plan, you can lose three inches from your waistline in just eight weeks.



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**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

1. Which of these would be best for storing a liquid?
  - a) A container
  - b) Wax paper
  - c) Saran wrap
  
2. What does Lee mean when he says, “I wish we could vacuum seal them”?
  - a) He wishes he had a way to clean them.
  - b) He wishes there weren’t so much dust in the package.
  - c) He wishes he had a way to remove all the air.

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**WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?**

**to go to waste**

The phrase “to go to waste,” in this podcast, means to become ruined before something has been fully used, especially referring to food that has spoiled: “This nonprofit organization collects food from restaurants so it doesn’t go to waste, and shares it with homeless people.” The phrase “to waste (one’s) breath” means to speak without receiving results, usually because another person is not listening or paying attention: “You’re wasting your breath. Heather will never follow your advice.” The phrase “to waste away” means to become weaker and thinner due to an illness: “Ingrid is wasting away, but the doctors can’t figure out what’s wrong.” Finally, the phrase “to be wasted on (someone)” means that someone does not recognize the value of something: “Your instructions are wasted on Liam. He won’t listen and will simply do it his own way.”

**might as well**

In this podcast, the phrase “might as well” is used to suggest doing something, or agreeing to another person’s suggestion, without very much excitement or enthusiasm: “We might as well go to the museum if there isn’t anything else to do.” The phrase “I might add” is used to emphasize something: “She’s a great employee and, I might add, she has worked here longer than anyone else.” The phrase “I might have known” is used to mean that one should not be surprised by something: “I might have known he’d leave in the middle of the night without telling anyone.” Finally, the phrase “might-have-been” describes something that one wishes had happened, or that could have happened: “Looking back on your life, do you ever wonder about the might-have-beens?”



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**CULTURE NOTE**

**Home Canning**

In the past, “preserving food” (preparing food so that it can be eaten much later) was “critical” (extremely important) in “rural” (not in the city) America. Stores were “few and far between” (very far apart) and offered a small number of items to choose among, especially in the wintertime. So families had to preserve food for the long winter.

One of the best ways to “put up” (preserve and store) food is to “can” food, putting it into glass jars and heating them to a very high temperature and pressure to kill the bacteria that would “otherwise” (if one didn’t heat them up) cause the food to “spoil” (become ruined; go bad). Food is usually canned in Mason jars, which are thick glass jars with a thin metal lid and a metal “ring” (circle) that screws on to make a tight “seal” (a line where two pieces meet tightly, without letting air or liquid move between).

Americans often can tomatoes, green beans, beets, corn, and beans. Among fruits, peaches, pears, and cherries are some of the most popular canned fruits.

Some people like to can more than just a single item, so they might can a “tomato sauce” (a thick red liquid made from tomatoes, onions, garlic, and herbs, often served over noodles). And others like to make canned “jams” and “jellies” (thick spreads made from fruit and sugar, often put on bread or toast) or “syrups” (thick liquids made from fruit and sugar, often poured over pancakes and waffles). Finally, some people can fish and other types of meat.

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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 1,057 – Storing Food.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 1,057. 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](http://ESLPod.com). Take a look at our ESL Podcast Store, which has some additional courses in Business and Daily English I'm sure you'll enjoy.

On this episode, we learn all about how to keep – that is, how to store – food. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Lee: Wow, what are we going to do with all these leftovers?

Sarah: Let's store them in different containers and we can each take some to work to share. We won't be able to eat all of this ourselves, and I don't want it to go to waste.

Lee: Okay, I'll get some plastic containers and sandwich bags for the cookies.

Sarah: Can you also grab some wax paper, too? We'll need to put some between each brownie so they don't stick together.

Lee: We're not going to have enough plastic containers. How about wrapping up some of this food in Saran wrap or aluminum foil?

Sarah: Great idea. I think I have some freezer bags, too. We might as well freeze a couple of pieces of cake to eat later.

Lee: I wish we could vacuum seal them and store more pieces. That cake was really good!

Sarah: I know. I could eat three pieces in one sitting.

Lee: Hmm. On second thought, for the sake of our waistlines, maybe that wouldn't be such a good idea.



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[end of dialogue]

Our dialogue today is all about storing, or keeping, food. It begins with Lee saying to Sarah, “Wow, what are we going to do with all these leftovers?” “Leftovers” (leftovers) refers to food that was served at a meal, such as at dinner, but that nobody ate. Usually leftovers, if there is a lot of food, are kept to be eaten later. Of course, you don’t want to throw away good food. So, leftovers would be food that was prepared for one meal, wasn’t eaten, and is then stored to be eaten at a later time. “To store,” as a verb, means to keep something to use in the future, to put away something to use later.

Sarah says, “Let’s store them,” meaning the leftovers, “in different containers.” A “container” (container) is a box that is used to store something. You could have a plastic container, which is very common in kitchens in the United States. Plastic containers are often used to store leftovers. Sarah says, “We can take some to work to share.” She’s referring here to the leftovers. They can take some of the leftovers to work in order to give to other people to eat. She says, “We won’t be able to eat all of this ourselves, and I don’t want it to go to waste.”

“To go to waste” (waste) means that it will not be used and will therefore have to be thrown away. The word “waste” is often used to refer to junk or garbage or simply something that you’re not going to use anymore and that you are going to get rid of or throw away. “To let something go to waste” means to not eat something, in this case, or use something, and therefore it will have to be thrown away because, of course, food won’t last forever. Eventually the food will change in such a way that you can no longer eat it.

Lee says, “Okay, I’ll get some plastic containers and sandwich bags for the cookies.” “Plastic” (plastic) is a material that we use to make all sorts of things, including containers (I mentioned earlier about how popular plastic containers are in American kitchens). Well, plastic is the material that is used for all sorts of things nowadays. It can be a soft material or it can be a very hard material. “Sandwich bags” are small plastic bags that are used to put, well, sandwiches in, or small amounts of food.

You don’t have to put a sandwich in a sandwich bag. You can put any sort of food inside of one. A sandwich bag is usually about a half a quart, let’s say, in size. It’s not that big. Maybe three or four inches by four or five inches, something like that. Sarah says, “Can you also grab some wax paper, too?” “Wax (wax) paper” is paper that has a little bit of wax on it that’s used for wrapping up food or for using especially with “baking” – when you cook food inside of an oven.



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“Wax” is a substance that we normally associate with candles; most candles are made out of wax. But “wax paper” is a special kind of paper that is used either in cooking or in storing food. Sarah says, “We need to put some” – meaning some wax paper – “between each brownie so they don’t stick together.” One common use of wax paper is to use it to separate different pieces of food that you want to separate later on.

A “brownie” is a small chocolate sweet that is quite popular with my wife, for example, made from typically sugar, butter, flour, and chocolate. Usually we use a little bit of egg when making a brownie as well. Lee says, “We’re not going to have enough plastic containers,” meaning we have more food than we have containers to store it in. “How about wrapping up some of this food in Saran wrap or aluminum foil?”

“To wrap (wrap) up” is a two-word phrasal verb meaning to package something, to put something in a container in order to either use it later or to move it from one place to another. If you give someone a gift, you usually wrap it with what is called “wrapping paper” (such as a birthday gift or a gift for, say, Christmas). “To wrap up,” as a phrasal verb, means to put something around the object – in this case, the food – in order to transport it or to store it.

Lee talks about two different kinds of materials that could be used to wrap up food. The first is “Saran (Saran) wrap.” Saran wrap is a thin, clear piece of plastic that is used for wrapping up food. The important thing about Saran wrap is that it sticks very easily to plastic and to itself. So you can put Saran wrap around something and it will stay wrapped – it won’t come apart like, for example, a piece of regular paper.

“Aluminum foil” (foil) is a thin piece of a flexible metal called “aluminum” – at least, it’s made with aluminum in it. Typically it’s silver in color and is used, again, to wrap food up. Almost every American kitchen will have both Saran wrap and aluminum foil for storing things, for wrapping things up.

Sarah says, “Great idea. I think I have some freezer bags, too.” A “freezer” (freezer) is a place where you keep things frozen, of course. That would be below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. A “freezer bag” is a special kind of plastic bag that usually is a little thicker than a sandwich bag and a little bigger in size, but you can use to put food into and then store in the freezer.

Sarah says, “We might as well freeze a couple of pieces of cake to eat later.” The expression “might as well” is used to make a suggestion or to agree with another person’s suggestion, but not with a lot of excitement or enthusiasm. You’re



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saying, “Well, yes. We should do this,” but you’re not that excited about it. If you don’t do it, it won’t be a big deal. Sarah tells Lee that they “might as well freeze a couple pieces of cake to eat later.”

Lee says, “I wish we could vacuum seal them and store more pieces. That cake was really good.” “To vacuum (vacuum) seal” something is to put it in a special kind of plastic package, usually, and remove all or most of the air from the package. This is often done with food in order to ensure – to make sure – that it doesn’t spoil, that it keeps fresh, that you can use it later on. Some people own special machine that will create vacuum seals around food so that you can have a better system of storing it. I don’t have one, myself.

Sarah says, “I know,” agreeing with Lee’s assessment of the cake as being really good. “I could eat three pieces in one sitting.” Sarah says the cake is so good that she could eat three parts of the cake, three pieces of the cake, “in one sitting.” “In one sitting” (sitting) means at once, or at one time without taking a break. Sarah is saying she could sit down and have one piece of cake and then another piece of cake and then another piece of cake, all at one time.

Lee says, “Hmm,” indicating that he’s thinking about something. “On second thought” – thinking about it more carefully – “for the sake of our waistlines, maybe that wouldn’t be such a good idea.” Lee is saying that maybe the suggestion of freezing more cake is not a good idea. Why? Because he’s worried about his and Sarah’s waistlines. Your “waist” (waist) – notice the different spelling from an identically sounding word “waste,” as in “to go to waste” – refers to a part of your body that is above your hips and below your ribs.

So basically, when you put on a pair of pants, the pants go up to your “waistline.” That’s the line that would indicate where your waist is located. Usually when you are measuring your waistline, you are measuring a part of your body that is just above your hips. Your “hips” are at the tops of your legs – where your top of your body, what we would call your “torso” (torso), is joined to your legs. That’s the waist area, and the waistline would be, in this case, an indication of how fat you are or how skinny you are.

If you’re worried about your waistline, you’re worried about getting too fat and gaining too much weight, and that’s what Lee is referring to. He’s saying that perhaps we shouldn’t keep this cake because if we eat it, we’ll become fat. And that, in fact, happens quite a bit when people eat too much cake, bread, pasta, sugar – all the good things in life.

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



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[end of dialogue]

You can't wrap our scriptwriter's scripts up in Saran wrap, but if you listen to them, you'll learn a lot of English. Thank you, Dr. Lucy Tse, for your wonderful scripts.

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

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