



ESL Podcast 690 – Types of Views

GLOSSARY

to book – to reserve; to make arrangements to have or do something at a particular date and time in the future

* The earlier you book your flight, the cheaper it will be.

city view – the ability to see the buildings in a city from a particular window or position

* One of the most famous city views in New York City is probably of Times Square.

panoramic view – the ability to see a very wide area of one's surroundings from a particular window or position

* Once we reach the top of the mountain, we'll enjoy a panoramic view of nearby lakes.

highway robbery – overpriced; something that is extremely expensive, costing more than one believes it is worth

* The way airlines charge passengers high fees to check their luggage is highway robbery!

steep – very expensive; at a very high price

* Tuition at universities is so steep that some students are deciding not to continue their education.

courtyard – an outdoor area that is completely surrounded by buildings, usually decorated with plants, trees, and benches or tables and chairs

* On nice days, most of the office workers eat their lunch in the courtyard.

obstructed – blocked; not able to be seen or accessed because another object is in the way

* If you go to the theater, don't sit in 24J! Your view of the stage is completely obstructed by a pillar.

peek-a-boo – a partial view of something, especially if another object moves in a way that allows one to see the more distant object only some of the time

* This window gives us a peek-a-boo view of the lake, as long as the wind is strong enough to push those branches out of the way.

ocean view – the ability to see the sea from a particular window or position

* At first they were really excited to buy a home with an ocean view, but then they realized how windy it was that close to the sea.



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to end up with – to ultimately have or get a particular thing, especially after a period of waiting or making an effort

* How did you end up with a degree in basket weaving?

ground floor – first floor; the lowest, first floor of a building, at the same level as the ground outside

* During an earthquake, is it safer to be on the ground floor or on the top floor of a tall building?

back and forth – going in two different directions repeatedly; moving forwards and backwards

* He walked back and forth in the hospital's waiting room while waiting to hear the results of his daughter's surgery.

upper – high; above; not the bottom

* The dentist says I have three cavities in my upper teeth.

preference – a desire to do or have one particular thing instead of another

* My preference would be to see a romantic comedy, but it's your turn to choose the movie.

penthouse – the nicest, most expensive room or group of rooms in a hotel or apartment building, almost always on the top floor

* The bathroom in their penthouse apartment is bigger than our entire house!



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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is Andrea trying to do?
 - a) She's trying to read about all the different hotel rooms.
 - b) She's writing a review of hotel room views.
 - c) She's deciding which hotel room to reserve.
2. Why doesn't George want a room on the ground floor?
 - a) Because he doesn't like people walking past his room.
 - b) Because he doesn't want to spend that much money.
 - c) Because he doesn't like to stay in a dirty room.

WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

steep

The word "steep," in this podcast, means very expensive: "That restaurant is too steep for me! Let's go to a deli instead." The word "steep" can also refer to a rapid change in the amount of something, either an increase or a decrease: "What caused the steep fall in stock prices?" Or, "Is it legal for the landlord to have such steep rent increases?" When talking about a road, hill, or mountain, "steep" refers to the angle and how quickly it increases or decreases in height over a particular distance: "This trail is really steep, so only experienced hikers should use it." Finally, as a verb, "to steep" means to put something solid into a hot liquid so that the liquid obtains the same flavor: "How long should I let this teabag steep?"

upper

In this podcast, the word "upper" means high or above, not on the bottom: "They keep medicine on the upper shelves of the closet, where their children cannot reach it." The phrase "to have the upper hand" means to have an advantage over another person: "Soriah has been playing poker for 20 years, so she has an upper hand over the younger players." The phrase "a stiff upper lip" refers to someone's ability to control his or her emotions and not let other people know that one is sad or upset: "He has a stiff upper lip, and even when his wife died he never let anyone see him cry." Finally, an "upper" can be an illegal drug that makes someone feel happy and energetic: "Is she naturally that happy, or is she taking uppers?"



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CULTURE NOTE

Special Hotel Requests

When “booking” (reserving) a hotel room, the “reservations agent” (the person whose job is to process reservation requests) needs to know how large of a room is needed and when. But callers can make many other requests, too.

Some people want to make sure they have a room that is “wheelchair accessible.” These rooms have wider doors that can “accommodate” (make room for; be big enough for) a “wheelchair” (a chair with wheels on the bottom, used by people who cannot walk) and do not have any steps or stairs. Wheelchair-accessible rooms also have “grab bars” (long, round pieces of metal attached to a wall) in the bathrooms to help people move from their wheelchair to the toilet or bathtub.

Other people make special requests to reduce the amount of noise they hear during their hotel “stay” (period of time in a particular place). They might request a room away from the elevators, lobby, swimming pool, or other public places. They might also request a room that is not on the ground floor, or away from the parking lot.

Other requests are related to the guest’s “comfort” (pleasant, calm feelings based on what is around oneself). Guests might request a “non-smoking room” if they don’t want to smell “stale” (old and exposed to air) cigarette smoke. In nicer hotels, they might request a particular type of “mattress” (the large, soft object people sleep on) or pillow.

Finally, people make special requests to save money. If many people are booking rooms for a single event, they might ask for a “large-party discount” (reduction in price). People can also ask if there are discounts for members of certain organizations, such as “AAA” (the American Automobile Association), “frequent flyer programs” (programs that reward people who fly often), or the military.

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



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COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 690: Types of Views.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 690. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Support this podcast by becoming a member of ESL Podcast. Go to our website, eslpod.com, to find more information on becoming a member and getting the Learning Guide that comes with each episode.

This episode is called "Types of Views." "Views," here, refers to what you can see out your window from a home or hotel room. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Andrea: Help me decide on which type of hotel room to book.

George: I want the one with a bed.

Andrea: Very funny. We have a choice of different views, and each one is a different price. For instance, a room with a city view is 175 dollars a night and a panoramic view is 275 dollars a night.

George: 275 dollars a night?! That's highway robbery!

Andrea: If you think that's too steep, there are a few other options. We can get a courtyard room with no view for 120 dollars a night or a room with an obstructed or peek-a-boo ocean views for 130 dollars a night.

George: I don't really care which type of room we get as long as we don't end up with a room on the ground floor. I don't like having people walking back and forth outside my window all night.

Andrea: Okay, I can request a room on an upper floor. You really don't have a preference?

George: No, not really.

Andrea: There is a penthouse room for 400 dollars a night.



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George: What?! For that price, I'd better get a view of the Eiffel Tower, the Parthenon, and the Great Wall of China!

[end of dialogue]

The dialogue begins with Andrea saying to George, "Help me decide on which type of hotel room to book." "To book," as a verb, means to reserve, to make arrangements to have something done at a particular date or time in the future. For example: "I book a hotel room," meaning I am reserving that room; I am saying that I am going to use that room on a certain date.

George says, "I want the one with a bed." He's saying that he wants a hotel room that has a bed in it. George, of course, is trying to be funny. Andrea then says, "Very funny," which here means that's not very funny, you are joking when I am trying to be serious. She says, "We have a choice of different views, and each one is a different price." "For instance," she says, meaning for example, "a room with a city view is 175 dollars a night and a panoramic view is 275 dollars a night." A "city view" is a, in this case, hotel room that gives you a view of the buildings of the city. If you ever go to New York City and you stay in Manhattan, the downtown area, you will have from any hotel room a city view. That is, you will be able to see the lights of the city – of other buildings in the city. A "panoramic view" is where you have the ability to see a very wide area, usually because you are high up in the building or you have lots of windows around the room that allows you to see a much wider portion or section of whatever it is you're looking at. That's a "panoramic (panoramic) view."

George is surprised at the price; he says, "275 dollars a night?!" Notice "a night" here means per night or each night. He says, "That's highway robbery!" "Robbery" is when someone steals something from you. A "highway" is a road, usually one where you travel fast. But the expression "highway robbery" refers to previous times, where people traveled and it wasn't safe to travel; you might be robbed by someone as you were traveling down the road. That's what George thinks the price of the hotel is; he says it's "highway robbery," meaning it is too expensive, it cost more than it should.

Andrea says, "If you think that's too steep, there are a few other options." "Steep" (steep) means very expensive here, at a very high price. "Steep" has some other meanings as well; you can find those in the Learning Guide for this episode. Andrea says, "We can get a courtyard room with no view for 120 dollars a night." A "courtyard" (one word) is an outdoor area that is completely surrounded by buildings. Usually, a courtyard is square or rectangular. There



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are sometimes plant or trees inside the courtyard. When you have a courtyard room, of course, you are looking just at other rooms in the same building, so there really isn't a view. That's why Andrea says, "We can get a courtyard room with no view for 120 dollars a night." She says they could also get a room with obstructed or peek-a-boo ocean views for 130 dollars a night. "Obstructed" (obstructed) is blocked, not able to be seen because something else is in the way. In some theaters or stadiums there are things in front of your seat that block your view, that do not allow you to see what is on the other side. That would be an "obstructed view." "Peek-a-boo" (peek-a-boo) is actually a child's game, or a game that an adult plays with a very young child or baby. "Peek-a-boo" is when you hide yourself so that the child can't see you, and then suddenly you put your head in a position where the child can see you, and then back again. And, small children often find this amusing; they think it's fun. A "peek-a-boo view" would be a view that you would have sometimes and sometimes not. It's a partial view of something, similar to obstructed but not obstructed all the time. Perhaps there is a tree in front of the window, and when the wind blows you can see through, so sometimes you can see. This is a "peek-a-boo ocean view," a view of the ocean or the sea, such as the Pacific or Atlantic.

George says, "I don't really care which type of room we get as long as we don't end up with a room on the ground floor." "To end up with" means to get a particular thing after waiting or making an effort. It's a very broad, general expression that can be used in many different instances. For example if you are selling something at your store, at the end of the day after many hours someone may say to you, "Well, how much did you end up with today?" meaning after working those many hours how much money did you have. The expression here refers to what will happen after Andrea makes the reservation, after they travel to the hotel, once they get to their room. What did they end up with? What did they finally or ultimately get? What George does not want to end up with is a room on the ground floor. And, in the U.S. the "ground floor" is the first floor, the floor that is the lowest in the building not including what is below ground, the basement. George does not want a room on the ground floor. He says, "I don't like having people walking back and forth outside my window all night." "Back and forth" means going in two different directions repeatedly, moving in one direction and then walking back in the other direction. He's saying that he doesn't want other people at the hotel walking by his window throughout the night, as would be perhaps more common on the ground floor. I'm not sure if that's true, but that's what George thinks.

Andrea says, "Okay, I can request a room on an upper floor." "Upper," here, would mean above the first floor, high up in the building. "Upper" has a couple of different meanings; take a look, again, at our Learning Guide for some more



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explanations. She then says, “You really don’t have a preference?” meaning there isn’t one particular kind of room that you want besides an upper room or upper-floor room. George says, “No, not really.” Andrea says, “There is a penthouse room for 400 dollars a night.” The “penthouse,” especially in an expensive hotel or condominium building, is the highest floor, usually much bigger than the other rooms. It is also, of course, the most expensive.

George says, “What?! For that price (for 400 dollars), I’d better get a view of the Eiffel Tower, the Parthenon, and the Great Wall of China!” Once again, George is making a joke here. He’s saying that if he has to pay 400 dollars a night, he should have a view of some of the great landmarks or places in the world. He should be able to see the Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Parthenon in Athens, or the Great Wall of China. Obviously, George doesn’t stay in expensive hotels very often!

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

[start of dialogue]

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[end of dialogue]

You'll definitely end up with better English by listening to the scripts written by our own wonderful Dr. Lucy Tse.

From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us again, won't you, on ESL Podcast.

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