

## ENGLISH I USE EVERY DAY

The best way to learn new vocabulary is by seeing new words and phrases used in context. In this lesson, I will recount my attempt at giving my husband an unforgettable birthday while providing you with some common English terms and phrases that I use daily. You can also test your understanding with a follow-up quiz at the end.

### Will's 30th Birthday: Vocabulary Breakdown

#### PARAGRAPH 1

So this was a few years ago now. As many of you know, my husband Will used to be a farmer, and because his birthday is in July and clashes with “high season” in the farming world, he’d never had a birthday party as an adult. So I wanted to arrange something special for him, and I settled on surprising him with a golf tournament. But I wasn’t sure how to **get it off the ground**. So, I turned to Will’s best friend, Charlie, who first told me it was **the best idea ever** (go me!) and then gave me some advice. He said, “**If I were you, I’d** call the club first. Then get a small group together to play and invite the partners for dinner afterwards.”

#### ● VOCABULARY

##### **to get sth off the ground**

###### **Use:**

This is such a common phrase among native speakers which means **to make something start to happen or to succeed**.

###### **Example:**

*I have so many ideas, but I never seem able to **get them off the ground**.*



**the best day ever****Use:**

We use this structure with a superlative in English to respond with enthusiasm.

In speech, we often omit **the** and just say—

**best idea ever!**

**worst film ever!**

**hardest exam ever!**

**Example:**

*I can't believe you made me watch that — **worst film ever!***

**If I were you, I'd...****Use:**

You might recognise this as the second conditional, and it's such a common use of this structure as we LOVE to give advice.

**Example:**

***If I were you, I wouldn't** invite Jack to the party; he always get's overexcited.*

**PARAGRAPH 2**

So I went to the golf club where Will played and told them what I wanted. **They were all**, “What a brilliant idea!” blah blah, and they told me that they had a special menu available around the time that I was planning Will’s get-together. The chef even popped out and said, “Oh, **you’re in for a treat.**” It looked a bit pricey, but they assured me it was well worth the money. Then they started recommending me some very expensive whiskey I could have ready for Will when he finished playing. I politely said, “Hmm, **I’m not sure about that. Let me have a think.**”

**VOCABULARY**

## They were all...

### Use:

Native speakers use the expression **He was all...** or **I was all...** etc. in spoken English, often to convey that someone had strong feelings about something, whether or not we think they're being sincere.

### Example:

*I invited Geri to the party, and **she was all**, "Awesome! I'll be there!" and then she didn't turn up.*

## you're in for a treat

### Use:

We love using this phrase **to say that something is a good idea.**

We also sometimes use it **sarcastically** to say that something is going to be challenging or not very good.

### Example:

*A: I signed up for a spinning class with Helen tomorrow. B: Oh, **you're in for a treat!***

## I'm not sure about that

### Use:

We Brits use this all the time because we hate saying no or disagreeing directly.

### Example:

*I think we should have a picnic for Olivia's birthday. - **I'm not sure about that.***

## Let me have a think

### Use:

This is another really common expression that basically means **no**, but I don't want to say it right now.



**Example:**

*That's sounds like a great plan, mate, but **let me have a think**, yeah?*

**PARAGRAPH 3**

I **got the ball rolling** with the invitations by calling some of Will's closest friends. "**Are you free on** Saturday the 3rd of June?" "**Do you fancy** coming down to celebrate Will's 30th?"

**VOCABULARY****to get the ball rolling****Use:**

This is another common phrase that we use meaning **to make something start to happen**.

**Example:**

*It looks like no one wants to speak first, so I'll **get the ball rolling!***

**Are you free on...?****Use:**

This is one of the most common ways **to ask someone to attend an event you're planning**.

**Example:**

***Are you free on** Sunday? We're thinking of going out for a pub lunch.*

**Do you fancy...?****Use:**

We use this phrase as another way **to ask if someone wants to do something**.

**Example:**

***Do you fancy** going out for a bite to eat?*



## BONUS!

I said **Will's 30th**, not **Will's 30th birthday**. It's common to shorten significant birthdays like this: Lucy's 18th, Pete's 60th.

## PARAGRAPH 4

The forecast said it was going to rain on the day, but I decided **to play it by ear** and didn't make any other plans. It turned out to be gorgeous weather, and Will **was over the moon** when I told him what was happening. When we got to the gold club, it turned out that I had been told the wrong prices, and instead of £60 a head, it was £100 a head on Saturdays. I literally trembled as I handed over my credit card. He and his mates played a round of golf and had a tippie between holes. We finally sat down to eat, and Will, who was slightly tipsy and feeling generous, accidentally said, "Don't worry, guys, **we got this**." He accidentally offered to pay for everyone's meal. Now **bear in mind** that the golf club had put their prices up, so it was going to be incredibly expensive. We were also in the middle of a mortgage application, so cash was a bit tight. At the time, when I had to pay for all of those rounds of golf and a meal for, I think, about 14 people! But what could we do? Everyone had an amazing time, and they said the food was **out of this world**. We finally **called it a night** at about midnight. I needed a little **lie-down** when I saw the bill, but it was Will's first birthday party in about ten years, so no regrets.

## ● VOCABULARY

**to play it by ear****Use:**

We use this phrase **to talk about how we will deal with a situation as it develops rather than making plans**.

**Example:**

*I don't know how many people are coming; **we'll have to play it by ear**.*



**to be over the moon****Use:**

We use this idiom a lot as it means **to be very happy**.

**Example:**

My sister was **over the moon** when I offered to babysit her children for the night.

**We've/I've got this****Use:**

This a common expression **used when offering to pay for something**.

**Example:**

Don't worry about lunch today. **I've got this**. I owe you one.

**bear in mind****Use:**

This widely used expression means **remember or consider**.

**Example:**

**Bear in mind** that I only cooked for ten people, but over 30 turned up.

**out of this world****Use:**

This is a great expression **used to emphasise how fantastic something is**.

**Example:**

The decorations were **out of this world!**

**to call it a day/night****Use:**

This means **to stop what you are doing because you feel like you've done enough** or you don't want to do it any more.



**Example:**

At 10pm, I decided **to call it a night** and finish up in the morning.

**a lie-down | to have/to need a lie-down****Use:**

We use this term both **literally, when we're tired**, and **metaphorically, when something shocks us profoundly**.

**Example:**

After seeing the price tag on the dress, I needed **a lie-down**.

## Will's 30th Birthday: Full Story

So this was a few years ago now. As many of you know, my husband Will used to be a farmer, and because his birthday is in July and clashes with “high season” in the farming world, he’d never had a birthday party as an adult. So I wanted to arrange something special for him, and I settled on surprising him with a golf tournament. But I wasn’t sure how to **get it off the ground**. So, I turned to Will’s best friend, Charlie, who first told me it was **the best idea ever** (go me!) and then gave me some advice. He said, “**If I were you, I’d** call the club first. Then get a small group together to play and invite the partners for dinner afterwards.”

So I went to the golf club where Will played and told them what I wanted. **They were all**, “What a brilliant idea!” blah blah, and they told me that they had a special menu available around the time that I was planning Will’s get-together. The chef even popped out and said, “Oh, **you’re in for a treat**.” It looked a bit pricey, but they assured me it was well worth the money. Then they started recommending me some very expensive whiskey I could have ready for Will when he finished playing. I politely said, “Hmm, **I’m not sure about that. Let me have a think**.”

I **got the ball rolling** with the invitations by calling some of Will’s closest friends. “**Are you free on Saturday the 3rd of June?**” “**Do you fancy** coming down to celebrate Will’s 30th?”



The forecast said it was going to rain on the day, but I decided **to play it by ear** and didn't make any other plans. It turned out to be gorgeous weather, and Will **was over the moon** when I told him what was happening. When we got to the golf club, it turned out that I had been told the wrong prices, and instead of £60 a head, it was £100 a head on Saturdays. I literally trembled as I handed over my credit card. He and his mates played a round of golf and had a tipple between holes. We finally sat down to eat, and Will, who was slightly tipsy and feeling generous, accidentally said, "Don't worry, guys, **we got this.**" He accidentally offered to pay for everyone's meal. Now **bear in mind** that the golf club had put their prices up, so it was going to be incredibly expensive. We were also in the middle of a mortgage application, so cash was a bit tight. At the time, when I had to pay for all of those rounds of golf and a meal for, I think, about 14 people! But what could we do? Everyone had an amazing time, and they said the food was **out of this world.** We finally **called it a night** at about midnight. I needed a little **lie-down** when I saw the bill, but it was Will's first birthday party in about ten years, so no regrets.





## QUIZ!

Choose the correct answer for each question.

1) "This dessert is \_\_\_\_\_," he said as he took a bite.

- a. out of this world
- b. the best idea ever
- c. in for a treat

2) What phrase indicates you need time to consider an idea?

- a. I'm not sure about that.
- b. Let me have a think.
- c. Sounds good to me.

3) \_\_\_\_\_ that our budget is quite limited for this event.

- a. Bear in mind
- b. Bearing it in mind
- c. Bearing mind

4) To be over the moon means to feel sad and downcast.

- a. True
- b. False

5) Let's not set a strict schedule; we'll just \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. play it with ears
- b. play it by year
- c. play it by ear

6) How would you give advice using hypotheticals?

- a. You can...
- b. You should definitely...
- c. If I were you, I'd...

7) It's time to \_\_\_\_\_ on our new project.

- a. get the ball rolling
- b. getting started
- c. get something off the ground

8) \_\_\_\_\_ grabbing a coffee later?

- a. Are you fancy
- b. Do you fancy
- c. Are you free on

The End!

1) a 2) b 3) c 4) b 5) c 6) a 7) c 8) b

