**EPISODE 18**
**LEVEL B2**

## READING COMPREHENSION

**CLOTHES – ITEMS AND ADJECTIVES**

As lots of women, I am keen on buying clothes and wearing them, of course. Although it happens that I buy garments I never or hardly ever wear. Take this **patterned** skirt (= with different patterns on) that I bought in sales last summer. I don't know why I bought it, actually. Or these **tight-fitting** jeans (= close to your body) I got last month. I thought I looked good in them until I looked at myself in the mirror at home. Most of my clothes are rather **loose** (= not tight) or even **baggy** (= very loose), so I needed a change, but... I'm not sure I'll ever put on these trousers.

You can find lots of different clothes in my spacious wardrobe. Most of them are **plain** (= with no pattern on), but a couple of years ago I used to wear **striped** (= with lines of one colour on a background of a different colour) or **checked** clothes (= with a pattern of squares), although some people said they didn't suit me. I hardly ever wear skirts; for sure no minis, I've got just two or three **knee-length** ones (= reaching down to your knees). As for shoes, you'd have to be lucky to see me wearing **high-heels** (= shoes with high heels), I feel most comfortable in **flat shoes** (= without heels) or **boots** (= a kind of shoe covering all of your foot and part of your leg).

And I just love wearing all sorts of **accessories** (= additional objects that make you look more attractive), like **belts** (= made of leather, worn around your waist), **bracelets** (= a piece of jewellery worn around your wrist), rings or earrings. My friends know about it and always buy them for me as presents.

**More contexts for the new words:**

- I'd prefer to have **plain** yoghurt for breakfast today. (= without any things added to it)

**EXERCISE 1**

Put the words into categories.

baggy
belt
boots
bracelet
checked

earring
flat
high heels
knee-length
loose

patterned
plain
ring
striped
tight-fitting

| Patterns | Styles | Shoes | Accessories |
|----------|--------|-------|-------------|
|          |        |       |             |

**EXERCISE 2**

Complete the questions, then answer them.

1. In what kind of shoes do women look sexy: f………………………., high h………………………., or b……………………? Why?
2. When it comes to style, do you prefer l………………………, tight-f………………………, or b……………………… clothes? Why?
3. What a……………………… (e.g. jewellery) do you usually wear?

**ENGLISH IN USE**

Quite obviously, when describing clothes (or other nouns) we use different adjectives. Normally, you wouldn't use more than two or three adjectives at a time to describe one noun. But even if you use only three of them, there is a certain rule you must be aware of. The rule concerns **the order of adjectives** you use one after another.

It is useful to know how to use a couple of most commonly used ones. So, this is the order in which you would use adjectives:

1. **OPINION** (e.g. lovely, gorgeous, revolting)
2. **SIZE** (e.g. big, tiny, huge)
3. **OTHER QUALITIES** (e.g. warm, soft, tight)
4. **AGE** (e.g. new, young, ancient)
5. **COLOUR** (e.g. yellow, beige, purple)
6. **PATTERN** (e.g. striped, check, spotted)

7. **NATIONALITY** (e.g. Swiss, Spanish, foreign)
8. **MATERIAL** (silk, fur, suede)

And here are examples of sentences when these adjectives are used in the proper order, according to the rule presented above.

*Why does he always wear those hideous old shoes?*
*You would never see me wearing tight pink cotton trousers.*
*I bought a long patterned silk scarf the other day.*

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**IDIOM CLOSE-UP**

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*A/ Is the size of this dress ok?*
*B/ Yes, it FITS LIKE A GLOVE.*

*If something **fits like a glove**, it fits very well.*

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**PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP**

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1. If you TAKE a piece of clothing IN, you make it more narrow or tight, so that it fits you.

*I've lost some weight, so I'll have to have this skirt **taken in**.*

2. If you LET a piece of clothing DOWN, you use the extra cloth in the bottom fold to make something longer.

*As my daughter grew taller, I had to **let down** all of her dresses.*

**EXERCISE 3**
Match the problems with solutions.

1. It fits like a glove.          a. Let it down!.
2. It's too short.                b. No problem! :)
3. It's too loose.                c. Take it in!

| | NEWS | |
|---|---|---|

**SIZING MIX-UP**

National authorities are starting to **scrutinize** the sizing policies used in various stores. In an effort to introduce standardized guidelines for the whole fashion industry, inspectors have revealed that each shop has its own measuring and sizing standards. While it comes as no surprise to most women, who hardly ever buy a garment without trying it on, and have come to **embrace** the frustrations of unpredictable sizes, it does **vex** the uglier sex, who detest shopping in general, and hanging out in the fitting room in particular. The **rationale** behind substandard sizing practices is simple enough: you are more likely to come back to a shop where you wear size 40 instead of size 42! More surprisingly, perhaps, particular shops also lack internal standardization. This is especially true of H&M, where you might – on one day – buy a dress size 40, a pair of jeans size 42, and a blouse size 38, all fitting you like a glove! Who can explain that mystery?

GLOSSARY
- **to scrutinize** – to examine closely
- **to embrace** – to accept
- **to vex** – to frustrate
- **rationale** – explanation, justification

## KEY TO EXERCISES

**Ex.1**
Patterns: plain, patterned, striped, checked
Styles: tight-fitting, loose, baggy, knee-length
Shoes: flat, high heels, boots
Accessories: belt, bracelet, ring, earring

**Ex. 2**
1. flat, heels, boots
2. loose, fitting, baggy
3. accessories

**Ex.3**
1. b
2. a
3. c