

EPISODE 44
LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



PROBLEMS WITH CARS

My last month's journey to my friend's wedding was a real nightmare. I decided to drive since I didn't want to depend on public transport and be late. It turned out, however, that my car was not very reliable, either. To begin with, after several minutes I realized that I was **running out of petrol** and I had to stop at a petrol station to fill up. Then, a car driving behind me started **hooting** (= making a loud sound as a warning) at me - apparently I **had a puncture** (= there was no air in one of my tyres). I had to **pull over** (= stop by the side of the road). I was wearing my best clothes and I didn't want to get dirty, but luckily some nice man stopped and helped me change the wheel. With the wheel changed, I drove off happily. That wasn't my lucky day, though. I was in a hurry and I knew I was **going over** (= driving faster than) **the speed limit**. When I caught a glimpse of a police car, I **slammed on the brakes** (= braked with great force), but it was too late. I was stopped and asked to **get out of** (= leave) the car. Then all the routine proceedings: checking my papers and a **breath test** (= a test to see if I had drunk any alcohol). I didn't even protest when they told me I had to **pay a fine** (= money you pay when you have broken the law). It seemed as if all the possible problems had happened to me that day, well except for **crashing into** (= hitting) another car maybe. However, the worst thing was that I was late for my friend's wedding.



More contexts for the new words:

- He left the room having **slammed the door** with anger.
(= shut a door with great force so that it makes a loud noise)
- When he blew into the **breathalyzer** it turned out he had been drinking.
(= a piece of equipment used by the police for checking how much alcohol a driver has drunk)



EXERCISE 1

Match the problems 1-8 with their possible causes a-h.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 1. crash into another car | a) a pedestrian has jumped out in front of your car |
| 2. pay a fine | b) the car in front of you is really slow |
| 3. slam on the brakes | c) you broke the law |
| 4. go over the speed limit | d) you drove over broken glass |
| 5. hoot | e) you forgot to fill up |
| 6. pull over | f) you want to have a look at the map |
| 7. have a puncture | g) you were looking the other way |
| 8. run out of petrol | h) you're late for work |



EXERCISE 2

Complete each gap with one word, then answer the questions.

1. When did you last a fine? Why did you have to do it?
2. When did you last over the speed limit? Why?
3. Have you ever had a breath? Why?

ENGLISH IN USE



From the first paragraph of the text we know that the writer doesn't depend on public transport because you can't count on it and the person added '*that my car was not very reliable, either*'.

Remember that when you have two 'positive' ideas and you link them in one sentence, then you should use '**too**' at the end:

Buses are always late and the trams are late, too.

However, if you have two 'negative' ideas and they are similar, then 'too' cannot be used at the end of a sentence. Look what you are supposed to use:

A) *I don't like X.*

B) *I don't like X, either.*

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



A/ Harry seems to be **RUNNING OUT OF STEAM**.

B/ Yeah, he really seems tired and downcast.

When you **run out of steam**, you lose energy, enthusiasm, or importance.

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



1. When a car **RUNS OVER** a person or an animal, it hits and drives over them, injuring or killing them.

*An elderly man was **run over** at the corner of Świętokrzyska and Marszałkowska.
Henry was **run over** by a car outside his house.*

2. If someone is **KNOCKED DOWN**, they are hit by a vehicle and injured or killed.

*Two children were **knocked down** by a drunken driver.
Kate was **knocked down** just yards from her home.*



EXERCISE 3

Decide if these sentences are true or false. Correct the false ones.

1. 'Knock down' and 'run over' have very similar meanings.
2. A person can run over a car.
3. A train can run out of steam, just like a car can run out of petrol.



BUMPER STICKERS

If you've ever been to America, you couldn't fail to notice the seemingly **ubiquitous** bumper stickers. Driven by some kind of internal (or maybe external) **compulsion**, the citizens of the US feel **compelled** to decorate their **bumpers** with messages proclaiming their religion, political **affiliation**, attitude to life, or anything else. Some of the more witty examples include: '**Honk** if you're **horny**,' 'Don't worry what people think – they don't do it very often,' and 'A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle.' And what bumper sticker would you like to have?

GLOSSARY

- **ubiquitous** – present everywhere
- **compulsion** – a feeling that you really have to do sth
- **compelled** – forced
- **bumper** – a long thin bar of metal or plastic at the front or back of a car, designed to protect it if it hits anything
- **affiliation** – connection with an organization
- **honk** – make a loud noise using a horn
- **horny** – sexually excited

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex.1

1. g
2. c
3. a
4. h
5. b
6. f
7. d
8. e

Ex. 2

1. pay
2. go
3. test

Ex.3

1. True
2. False – a car can run over a person
3. False – a person can run out of steam