

EPISODE 48

LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Throughout the year there always seems to be some occasion to celebrate. First of all, we've got a lot of national or religious holidays that are celebrated by local communities or whole nations. Apart from that, there are days which are significant in each person's history, like birthdays or **anniversaries**.



Days like Christmas or New Year are called **bank holidays** (= public holidays) with all the shops, businesses and banks closed. Some, like Independence Day, **commemorate** (= remind people of) an important historical event. Various special **customs** and rituals are connected with many holidays. Take Valentine's Day and the tradition of sending love letters or buying romantic gifts; or Easter, when we **bless** food brought to church in a basket.

I'm sure everyone has heard of world famous local celebrations like Carnival in Brazil, annual bull fights in Spain or Oktoberfest in Germany. Such days give a chance for local communities to **get together** (= meet) and **join in** (= take part in) the celebrations. People of all **walks of life** (= backgrounds) can relax and enjoy themselves.

One thing only is a bit worrying here: the fact that over the years all holidays and celebrations have become much more **commercialized**.

More contexts for the new words:

- The company's policy was created purely on a **commercial** basis.
(= relating to making a profit)
- As a Pole you don't have to pay **customs** if you bring goods into another EU country.
(= the taxes you pay on goods that you bring into a country; duty)
- He wrote a poem **in commemoration of** the Pope's death.
(= to honour and remember an important person or event)



EXERCISE 1

Complete each gap with one word.

1. May 1st and 3rd are holidays in Poland.
2. You can meet folks from all walks of at university.
3. Christmas has become way too – all people think about is buying presents and spending money.
4. Throwing rice is one of the wedding
5. Don't stand in the corner! Join the fun!
6. We got married ten years ago – our is tomorrow.



EXERCISE 2

Add the missing vowels (a, e, l, o, u), then answer the questions.

1. What NNVRSRS do you always remember about?
2. What Christmas and Easter CSTMS are your favourite?
3. Is it good for a country to have a lot of BNK HLDYS? Why? / Why not?

ENGLISH IN USE



Let's look at one of the sentences from the lesson more closely:

We've got a lot of national or religious holidays that are celebrated by local communities (...).

The question for today is why the sentence uses 'have got' and not simply 'have'. What is the difference, if any, between these two popular verbs? It seems a piece of cake, but we are not always aware of it. HAVE and HAVE GOT have exactly the same meaning when you refer to 'possessing/owning' something or 'states', e.g.:

*Alan **has** a new bike. or Alan **has got** a new bike.
He **has** two sisters. or He **has got** two sisters.*

The only difference between 'have' and 'have got' in the sentences above is that 'have got' is more often used in spoken and informal writing by the British. Americans typically do not use the 'have got' structure.

But when it comes to the use of HAVE for meanings different than 'possess', so when HAVE denotes actions or experiences, only the 'have' form can be used, never 'have got'. Look at the examples that illustrate this:

*She **is having** a bath at the moment.*

They **had** dinner in a restaurant last night.
We are going **to have** a meeting in 2 hours' time.

In this meaning, unlike the meaning of 'possess', HAVE can be used in progressive tenses.

Be careful when making negatives or questions with HAVE and HAVE GOT. The former behaves like a regular verb, so you need auxiliaries to form negations and questions ('*She **didn't have** dinner yesterday*' / '*Why **do they have** three cars?*'), while the latter forms negations and questions through inversion ('*How many brothers **have you got?***' / '*They **haven't got** any pets.*')

And the last note about HAVE and HAVE GOT: remember that HAVE GOT exists only in the present, so when you want to use it in the past or future, it will be simply reduced to HAVE.

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



A/ Another party, son?
B/ Dad, I have to **LET MY HAIR DOWN** sometimes!

When you **let your hair down**, you relax.

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



1. When you **CHILL OUT**, you relax and stop being angry or nervous, or you spend time relaxing.

*I'm just going to **chill out** this weekend.*
*I'll have to **chill out** a bit before facing her again.*

2. When you **SPICE** something UP, you make it more interesting or exciting.

*There's nothing like a good party to **spice up** your life!*
*Newspaper reports tend to **spice up** the real story.*



EXERCISE 3

Complete the mini-story with the missing prepositions.

Christine was a typical 15-year-old girl, always wanting to party and have fun with her friends. Every weekend she would let her hair (1) at the local disco. Dancing was the best way to chill (2)! She also spiced (3) her room with posters of her fav pop stars, so she could look at them while listening to music. What a life!

NEWS



MAY 2ND

The Parliament has just announced that is going to reconsider having May 2nd as a bank holiday. For a few years, this day has officially been **dubbed** the Flag Day, and the **rank and file** employees no longer had to use their vacation time to have the day for themselves. However, critics argue that this additional day off is **detrimental to** the economy of the nation. After all, Poland already has the biggest number of bank holidays in Europe – and the society seems to be demanding even more! More days off mean smaller **GDP**, and thus less money in the national budget. And what do you think?

GLOSSARY

- **dubbed** – named
- **rank and file** – ordinary
- **detrimental to** – bad for
- **GDP** – Gross Domestic Product - the total value of the goods and services that a country produces in a year

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex.1

1. bank
2. life
3. commercialised
4. customs
5. in
6. anniversary

1. anniversaries
2. customs
3. bank holidays

Ex.3

1. down
2. out
3. up

Ex.2