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Pre-Intermediate
Learning new words and expressions
Episode 5 - Too little, too late.



Let's listen to a dialogue in a restaurant:

Dialogue:

- Are there free tables?
- Yes, sir. Come this way please.
- Finally we have some time to eat out, James. It's brilliant that you came up with an idea to visit a Mexican restaurant. I'm looking forward to this meal!
- I'm glad you approve, Sarah.
- Are you ready to order?
- Yes, I'll try chicken breast. The menu says it's covered with chili sauce. How hot is it?
- It's Mexican cuisine, sir, so pretty hot. You have to watch out for spices.
- I'll have something else then. Can you recommend anything?
- Well, why don't you have a steak? It's our speciality.
- I wonder if I can have it served with vegetables?
- How do you like your steak done?
- Rare, almost raw. And two glasses of red wine, please.
- What would you like, ma'am?
- I'll have the same. And could I have clean cutlery? This fork and knife are dirty.
- Of course, ma'am. I'll bring it to you in no time!

- We have been waiting for hours, James! It pisses me off!
- Compared to other restaurants, this one is the worst so far. They should definitely improve their service.
- The waiter hasn't turned up for an hour already. Never even approached us.
- But I'm not sure I can get by without a meal today, Sarah. I will die of hunger! Look! They are bringing you your cutlery.
- Too little, too late. We are leaving this place! I can't put up with this service anymore. Let's go.

First, some phrases you may use in a restaurant:

Are there free tables?

I'll try / I'll have / I'll take...

I'll have something else.

I'll have the same.

Can you recommend anything?

I would like my steak rare / medium rare / medium / medium well / well done.

Could I have some salt?

Can I have it served with rice?

Could we have the bill / the check, please?

The steak is overdone.

There's been a mistake.

You overcharged us. (which means "in the bill it is said we have to pay for things we haven't ordered")

There are several ways to say that food was delicious:

Oh, the food is delicious! It's very tasty! The taste is sensational! It melts in your mouth. You just want to keep eating. It's an explosion of flavors in your mouth. It's cooked perfectly. It's heavenly. It's divine.

Let's look at some new words:

approach - come nearer, get closer: It's the 1st of December, we are approaching the end of the year. The cat approached me and licked my hand.

brilliant - excellent, marvelous: Shall we go to the cinema? - Brilliant idea! He achieved brilliant success in his business. The film was brilliant.

approve - agree or believe that someone or something is good or acceptable: I do not approve of your language. When my brother was a teenager, he wanted to wear his hair long. My parents did not approve of it. Or you can say that they "disapproved of it." My friends disapproved of my decision to leave the country and move to the USA.

cuisine - a style or manner of cooking: a French or Italian cuisine: I usually go to a local restaurant. They specialize in Asian cuisine. When I travel I try to taste local cuisine.

cutlery - knives, forks, and spoons used for eating or serving food. Normally there is clean cutlery on the tables in restaurants. But sometimes they bring it with food.

compared to / in comparison with: Compared to old phones, modern mobile phones are slimmer, lighter and more functional. In comparison with normal cats, my cat gets a kick of watching horses on TV.

I wonder - a wonderful expression which means "I would like to know": The menu says that fish goes with rice. I wonder if I can have it with vegetables? I wonder when they will bring our order. I wonder if there is life on Mars.

piss off somebody - make somebody angry, irritate, annoy somebody: It pisses me off when people fish for compliments.

improve - make something better, make the quality of something better: If you want to live up to your parents' expectations, you should improve your marks. I want to improve my health, so I started doing sports.

too little, too late - not enough and not given soon enough to be useful: Ok, I will help you, just don't get angry. - Too little, too late. He tried to save the situation by saying how attractive she was, but it was too little, too late.

Food for thought - something to think about. The book speaks about many important problems. It certainly gives you food for thought.

You noticed there are many phrasal verbs. A phrasal verb is when you have a verb + a preposition. Let's look at some of the most useful ones:

eat out - to eat not at home, in a restaurant: I don't like cooking, so I often eat out.

get over - to recover from something, to forget about something: He could not get over his uncle's death. His girlfriend left him a long time ago, but it took him a year to get over her. It still bothers me that we lost the match! - Get over it!

get on well with somebody - to have a good relationship with somebody, be friends with somebody: We get on well with our neighbors. They are nice people. Mary, you changed your job, right? Do you get on well with your new colleagues?

get together - to gather together, to have a meeting: My family get together every Sunday and have dinner. It can be a noun "get-together": My friends and I have get-togethers every weekend.

pull oneself together - to regain self-control, to become calm and behave normally again after being angry or upset: After years of drinking he decided to pull himself together and do something with his life. Just pull yourself together. There's no point crying about it.

get rid of - to free oneself of something: You killed the mouse, you will have to get rid of it. He pisses me off, I want to get rid of him - I want to no longer have him around.

carry on - to continue: Despite our difficulties, we must carry on.

come up with an idea - to have an idea: After he saw how depressed I was he came up with an idea to leave everything behind and have an amazing trip together.

look forward to something - to wait or hope for something with pleasure: I am looking forward to my trip to Spain next month! I am going to visit my family next weekend. I am looking forward to seeing them again.

put up with - to tolerate: I couldn't put up with his bad behavior and told him everything I thought about it. The hotel was terrible, but there was nowhere else to go so we had to put up with the inconvenience.

watch out - to be careful: When it's dark you have to watch out for ghosts and monsters. If you don't watch out, you will get in trouble.

turn up - to come, to arrive unexpectedly: Suddenly when nobody was waiting for him, John turned up and said hello. We couldn't get rid of him, he always turned up when we had a get together.

look up to somebody - to admire and have respect to somebody, when somebody is your role model: I always looked up to my father. He was an officer and had a very strong personality.

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