



Contact
Work

Spaces
Clothes

Should dogs be treated as people?



Weekly English Practice

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English
Coaching
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Let's talk about humans who have dogs

There has been a massive increase in dog ownership in Gasteiz over the last few years. Coach John gives a personal view on the phenomenon

bum: buttocks
howls: loud, sad cry made by a dog or wolf
hound: another word for dog. Also **mutt**
to bound: walk or run with long strides
to bear: to show or exhibit
arse (also 'ass'): another word for bum
to anthropomorphise: to attribute human characteristics to animals

When I first came to Gasteiz I was relieved to get away from the UK where 'the nation of dog lovers' had been a nightmare for me.

As a paperboy in Gateshead, I had been bitten on the **bum** by a mad dog which had waited months to get its teeth into me. Every day, as I posted the newspaper through the letterbox I could hear the horrible **howls** of the **hound** from hell and sometimes I could even feel its hot foul breath on my scared teenage hand.

One day I posted the paper and heard nothing, but suddenly I could see the dog **bounding** towards me from the back garden. I tried to escape by jumping over a fence but it caught me. As I screamed in pain, the owner of the dog told me it was my fault as I had been running away!

Basque people, it seemed to me, had a sensible and realistic attitude towards dogs in that they had them in their house in the village where they could run free and play useful roles as hunters and guard dogs.

However, little by little I have seen people here become more like people in the UK as regards dogs.

Every time I go for a drink in my neighbourhood at night I have to walk the gauntlet of dogs who just know I am afraid of them. They snarl and **bear** their teeth at me.

In the bar they run free and rub their **arses** up against my legs. They eat the remains of pintxos, smell each others' bums then lick the hands and faces of kids.

One day I asked a dog owner why he had a dog. He told me he was single and lonely and that he loved to be greeted everyday after work by his only 'friend'. Some 'friend' I thought - leaving the poor **mutt** alone all day in a small flat. I believe it is cruel to leave a dog alone all day in a flat while the owner is at work.

Some people even use dogs as offensive weapons and status symbols. Local police have to deal with numerous conflicts between neighbours over the behaviour of dogs.

It seems to me that a basic mistake dog owners are making is that they are **anthropomorphising** their pets. Dogs were one of the first animal species domesticated by humans but they are not people. They have worked for and helped humanity in so many ways and I am grateful for that but treating them like people is going too far.

I regularly see dogs wearing clothes in Vitoria. What's that all about? They have fur! Something has to be done!

"Let's chat about that!"

*Here is my programme to improve the lives of dogs & humans in our town
What do you think?*

Write your answers in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

- All potential dog owners should do a compulsory course **BEFORE** they are allowed to have a canine.
- All dogs should be on a leash at all times in public places.
- All dangerous dogs should wear a muzzle when out in public.
- Dog owners who do not clean up their pet's shit will be obliged to clean up in the area where they live for six months.
- People who want to have large dogs in a flat will have to justify why. Permission to have a large dog in a flat is not a right.



“iLook, iThink, iSpeak”

Express yourself better!

DOG & ANIMAL IDIOMS



the top dog

the most important person in an organisation

"My sister-in-law is the top dog in her company."

to go to the dogs

to deteriorate, to become bad

"Many things in our city have gone to the dogs during the last ten years."

to bark up the wrong tree

to ask the wrong question, ask a person who can't give you the right answer

"You're barking up the wrong tree. You need to ask someone else."

to be in the dog house

to be in trouble with another person

Marsha can't come out tonight. She's still in the dog house for lying to her parents.

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the birds and the bees

sex education

"I learned about the birds and the bees when my baby brother was born."

a cat nap

a short sleep

"I'm going to have a cat nap while you're cooking dinner."

to chicken out

to decide not to do something out of fear (usually just before)

"I can't believe you chickened out of doing the bungee jump!"

a copy cat

a person who does the same thing as someone else

"My sister is such a copy cat. She always buys the same things as me."

to be fishy

strange, suspicious, odd

"I wouldn't buy anything off him, he seems a bit fishy."

Hold your horses!

to wait and be patient

"Hold your horses! I'll be finished in the bathroom in a minute!"

to get the lion's share

to get the greatest percentage

"My aunt got the lion's share of the inheritance."

to kill two birds with one stone

to get two things done at once

"If you take the rubbish out when you go to do the shopping, you will kill two birds with one stone."

to let the cat out of the bag

to reveal a secret

"Who let the cat out of the bag about Rachel's surprise party?"

a little bird told me

I heard something (usually secretive or unknown) from someone (not named)

"A little bird told me that Becky is thinking of quitting her job."

a nest egg

money saved for the future

"We might have to use our nest egg if I'm out of work for a long time."

to pig out

to eat a lot of something

"I pigged out on tapas earlier this evening, I don't have room for dinner."

the rat race

the competition for position, promotion, power, money etc

"I'm going to quit the rat race, move to Spain and lead a simple life."

to smell a rat

to begin to suspect trickery etc

"When they investigated his apparent suicide, the police soon smelled a rat."

straight from the horse's mouth

information directly from the original source

"I know Jenny is pregnant, because I heard it straight from the horse's mouth."



Come and practise your social English!

4 fascinating 10 minute talks
(with pintxos & craft beer & good company)

- What is Curling?

- Learning Styles - Running

- Learn Anything In 20 Hours



Friday 2nd December
@The Molineux Lounge @The ECP Hub
San Ignacio de Loyola 15 (opposite Molinuevo)

Learn new things while practising English!