

BBC Learning English
6 minute English
Dhaka traffic



bbclearningenglish.com



Jackie: Hello, this is 6 minute English with bbclearningenglish.com. I'm Jackie Dalton, speaking to you from the streets of Dhaka, the Bangladeshi capital. With me today is our producer in Bangladesh, Senjuti Masud. Hello Senjuti!

Senjuti: Hello!

Jackie: There's a reason why we're out in the streets today, if you listen to the sounds going on around us, you'll get a clue as to what today's programme is about. Senjuti, today's topic was your idea... can you tell us what it is?

Senjuti: Yes, traffic.

Jackie: Right, and when I asked you... 'Let's make a programme about Dhaka - what shall we make it about?' Why was traffic the first thing that came to your mind?

(both discuss)

Jackie: Because there is so much traffic out here and it's so noisy, why don't we go inside so we can hear each other speak!

Ah, that's better. Before we continue, I have a question for you: many cities in the world have introduced a 'congestion charge', which is when you have to pay to drive your car into the city center. But which of these cities does NOT have a congestion charge?

Stockholm

Singapore



Geneva

Senjuti: I think it's Singapore

Jackie: Well, we'll find out if you were correct at the end of the programme. But now, let's look at some traffic related vocabulary. I like to use bad traffic as an excuse when I come in late to the office in the mornings. So I might say something like 'Ah, I'm sorry, I was stuck in traffic!'

Senjuti: Yes, and an expression we often hear related to traffic is a 'traffic jam'. So you could say, 'There was a really bad traffic jam!'

Jackie: Yes, a traffic jam. There are lots of traffic jams in Dhaka. You could also say there's 'really heavy traffic' in Dhaka – heavy traffic – lots of vehicles on the road. What other words come to mind when you think about traffic?

Senjuti: One word we might hear is chaos – when everything is crazy!

Jackie: Ah yes, chaos, everything is crazy and disorganized... it's chaos on the roads at the moment! I think it takes me about half an hour to get to work in the mornings.

Senjuti: Yes, it can quite boring...and that made me wonder: in Dhaka we spend so much time sitting in traffic jams – what do people do so they don't get bored?

Jackie: OK, let's have a listen. As you listen try to answer this question: what kinds of things do people do so they don't get bored in traffic?

Clip

Girl 1: I might play with my cell phone, maybe games or rechecking my inbox or may be calling someone and chatting with them... with friends



Man 1: We just wait for the traffic to get clear... and... listen to some CDs that we have in our car.

Jackie: OK, so what did we have there?

Senjuti: Well, the girl says she plays with her cell phone. For example, she might play games. And sometimes she chats to friends on the phone.

Jackie: And the man says he just waits for the traffic to clear and maybe listens to CDs or something.

Senjuti: But one girl we spoke to just gets cross. Who does she get cross with? Listen to find out.

Clip

Girl 2: Well actually when I am stuck in the traffic, I don't really think of anything, just that I get mad.... I keep on thinking that... government ... they are not actually taking much care to, you know, solve this problem. And that's why the traffic is increasing every single day.

Jackie: She gets cross with the government because she thinks the government isn't doing enough to sort out the traffic. Senjuti, she used the word 'mad' there, which is American English for angry – to get mad. What other emotion words might we associate with being stuck in traffic?

Senjuti: frustration

Jackie: Frustration, to be frustrated. To be annoyed, usually because you can't achieve something you that you want to achieve. Or things aren't going to plan.

Senjuti: I find being in traffic tedious.

Jackie: Tedious – another good word – very boring – tedious. So Senjuti what do you do in traffic jams to try to make them a bit less tedious?

(both discuss)



Jackie: Well it's nearly time for the end of the programme, let's see if you got the correct answer to the question at the beginning...

(answer)

That's all for this week, but do join us again for more 6 minute English.
Goodbye!