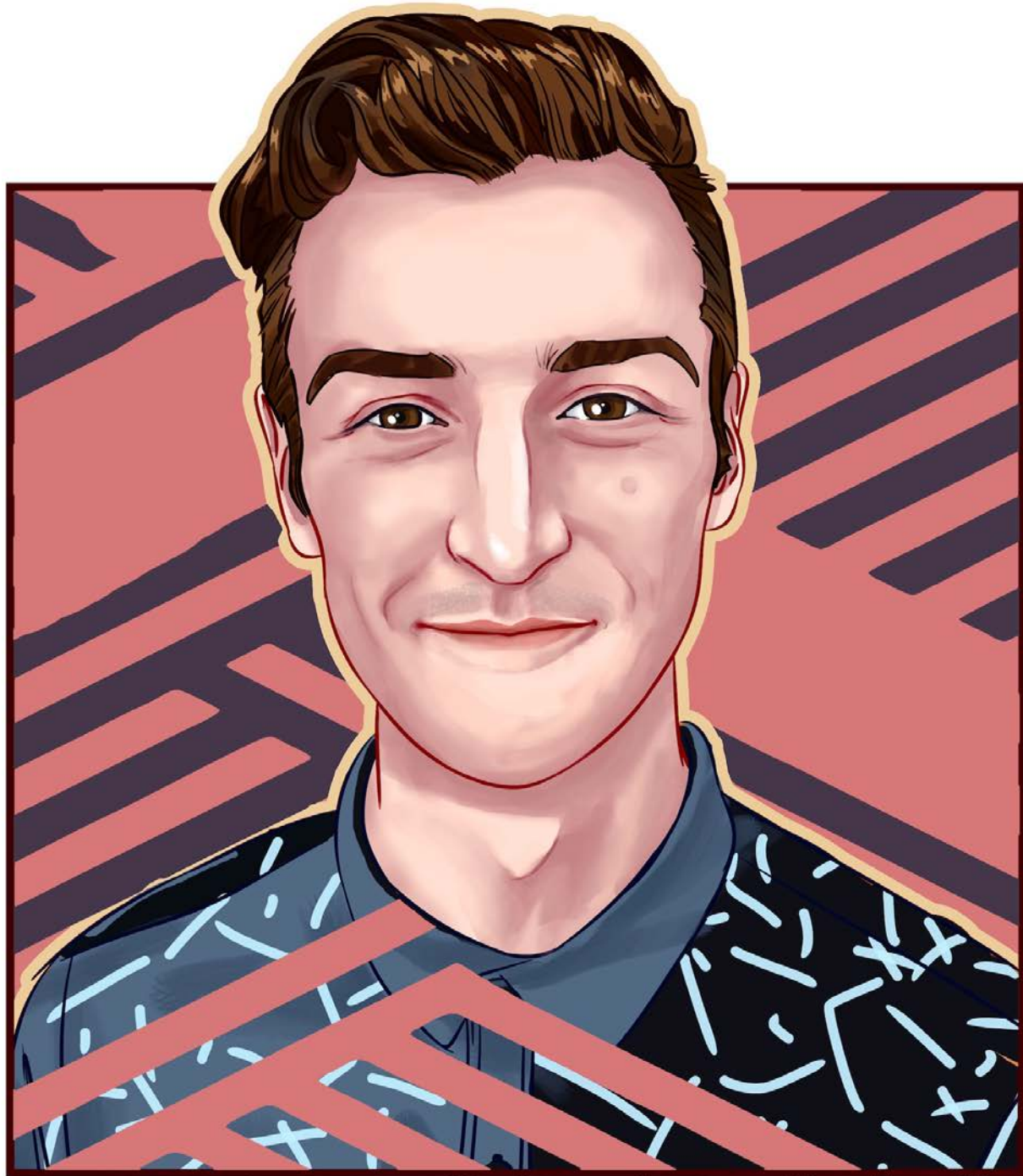


Jeremy's English Tips

Episode #11: How to talk about pets



Culips English Podcast

Transcript

Hello everyone! This is Jeremy and you're listening to Jeremy's English Tips, a series by the Culips English Podcast where I teach you interesting expressions or share language learning tips.

In this episode of Jeremy's English Tips by Culips, I'll be talking about pets, but more specifically dogs. However, all of what you will learn in this episode can be applied to almost any pet.

Now, have you ever met a dog owner in public and wanted to ask them about their dog? I grew up with dogs so I know what it's like to be a dog owner. When I took my dog out for a walk or to a dog park, people would often ask about her. My first dog's name was Tawny, which is the word for a yellowish-brownish color. Can you guess why we named her that? We named her that because of the yellowish-brownish color of her fur. She was a golden retriever, a breed of dogs that is known for being very playful and pure-hearted. Now, did you notice that I just said "she was a golden retriever"? When we speak in the past tense like this about a person or an animal, it means that they have passed away already. It means they have died and are not alive anymore. Also, did you notice how I said "she"? That's because Tawny was a female dog. Dog owners usually don't like it when people mistakenly call their dog a "he" when in fact the dog is a "she" or vice versa. And by the way, "vice versa" means the opposite too. So, what I meant was, if someone has a male dog and other people call that dog a "she" by accident, it could also bother the dog owner.

So, when you meet someone with a pet, one of the first things you should ask is "Is it a boy or a girl?" After the owner tells you, make a concerted effort to use the correct pronoun from then on. "To make a concerted effort" is similar to saying to focus and try hard to do something. So what I meant was, try to remember if the dog is a male or a female, and use "he" or "she" to talk about the dog.

After asking "Is your dog a boy or a girl?" another thing that is nice to do is to ask about the dog's name. If it is a male dog, then you can say "What is his name?" Or if it is a female dog, you can say "What is her name?" Dog owners are usually happy to share information about their dog. And they like it when other people remember their dog's name. In English

speaking culture, it is usually considered rude to forget someone's name after they have told you. The same goes for dogs. So, remember: remembering names is important when speaking English with people.

You can also ask about the breed of the dog by saying something like "What breed is she?" or if you think you know what breed the dog is, you can say "Is he, by chance, a cocker spaniel?" Adding in the phrase "by chance" is like saying *perhaps* and makes you sound more like a native speaker. Commenting about the physical appearance of the dog is also a nice thing to do. For example, "She has beautiful eyes!" or "His fur looks so soft!" or "I love how his tail wags like that!" These kinds of compliments will usually make the dog owner happy.

And after that, if you would like to pet the dog you can ask, "Do you mind if I pet him or her?" At this point the owner might say something like "Oh she isn't very friendly," or "She needs some time to warm up to new people." This means that the dog doesn't like to be pet by strangers. On the other hand, the owner could say "Sure! She loves to be pet, especially right here behind her ears." This is a green light for you meaning that you can go ahead and pet the dog. If you really like dogs and the dog seems to like you, you can get down low and pet them more vigorously. But beware, the dog may try to lick your face! Some people don't like this while others don't mind. So, it's up to you if you want to get licked.

Now in this episode we talked mostly about dogs. But pretty much everything I mentioned can be applied to other pets as well. It is just most common to see people with dogs out in public. You will probably never see someone taking their snake or tarantula (a huge spider) out for a walk. So, to summarize, here are the key points from this episode:

1. Ask if the animal is male or female
2. Ask about the animal's name
3. Try your best to remember that name
4. Ask about the breed or species
5. If it makes sense, you can ask to pet the animal

All right everyone, That's it for this episode. If you found this helpful or have questions, let us know! You can contact us at contact@culips.com or get in touch on social media. Happy English learning everyone!

Key Points

- Remember whether the animal is a male or a female
- If the animal has a name, remember it
- Ask the owner before petting the animal
- Ask about the breed or species of the animal
- Dog owners are most likely to be seen in public

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. What are two of the first things you should ask a pet owner about their pet?
2. Why do you think dogs are the most likely animals to be seen in public?
3. In your home country, how do people name their pets?
4. Why do you think it's important to remember the gender and name of the animal?
5. Do you have a pet or do you wish you had one? Why or why not?

Study Challenges

1. Practice having a pet related conversation with a friend
2. Write out a short dialogue of a conversation between a pet owner and yourself

Credits

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