

Jeremy's English Tips

Episode #21: To make a long story short



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.

Howdy, everyone! Howdy is sort of an old fashioned way of greeting people. But most native English speakers know it and say it sometimes just for fun. It comes from the phrase, how do you do? This is a much older way of saying how are you? These days, most people say how are you? How do you do over time was shortened to howdy. How do you do, how do you do? How do you do? Howdy. So anyway, I thought that might be a fun bonus word here to include in this episode, so I hope you liked it.

Now the expression for this episode is: **to make a long story short**. **To make a long story short**. I use this one a lot whenever I want to summarize something that would take too long to explain in full detail. Usually, this is used when there is a time limit on the discussion. So let's jump right into our first situation here to help this one make sense.

Max, Jeremy's friend works at a local architecture firm and is having lunch with Jeremy on his lunch break. Max wants to ask out a woman that he works with and has been asking Jeremy for advice. This time, Max asks Jeremy how he met his wife.

Oh, man, Max, good question. Well, I know you only have like 10 minutes left on your lunch break. So **to make a long story short**, we met in college. Because we joined the same club, we ended up hanging out a lot because we had mutual friends and things just kind of developed naturally from there. I'll tell you the whole story next time when you have more time.

In this situation, Jeremy understands that Max doesn't have much time left on his lunch break. So, rather than telling him the whole story, which would take far too long, he says, to make a long story short, we met in college. This is a way of summarizing or shortening a long story that, for some reason, can't be explained in full detail.

Now, for our second situation here, it's actually the same situation. But this is another thing that Jeremy could say. Pay close attention to how our Catch Word for this episode is shortened a bit.

Oh, man, it's a long story, and I know you have to get back to work soon. **Long story short**, we met in college.

So notice in this example that instead of saying to make a long story short, Jeremy shortened the phrase even more to: **long story short. Long story short.** This is very, very common in speech. You will definitely notice native speakers doing this. Now, that you're aware of this expression. A couple other things should be mentioned here.

In the United States, people say college to mean university. This is very, very common and although it is technically wrong in that college is a two year school and university is a four year school. Still, most Americans will say college to refer to university.

Hmm, so I wonder if there are any long stories that you have that might need to be shortened if you didn't have much time to speak. Can you think of any? If so, maybe you can let us know. You can get at us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, or by email, at contact@culips.com

As always, thank you for choosing Culips and including us in your English study. And we're looking forward to helping you more in the future. Take care everyone and happy English learning. Bye!

Extra example sentences

1. **To make a long story short**, the reason I'm late is there was a traffic accident on the highway.
2. You're probably wondering why I'm not at work. Well, **long story short**, I quit.
3. **To make a long story short**, Jessica didn't get home until 4AM!
4. I know you have to go soon, so anyway **long story short**, the repair shop said my computer can't be fixed and I'll have to buy a new one.
5. **To make a long story short**, they decided not to sell their house and are just going to keep living in Seattle.

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. What is an example of a story from your life that takes a long time to tell? How could you shorten it by using the expression, **to make a long story short**?
2. Do you know anyone who is very talkative and always tells long stories? What kind of stories does that person usually tell?
3. In this episode, Jeremy talked about the old fashioned greetings, *how do you do?* and *howdy*. Do speakers of your native language sometimes use old fashioned words? Why do you think they do this?

Study Challenges

1. Write three example sentences using **to make a long story short**.
2. Find an example of a native English speaker using **to make a long story short** in a movie, TV show, or podcast. Email us at contact@culips.com to let us know where you found it.
3. Record an audio diary where you tell a story. Then, tell that story again. But this time, summarize the story and make it shorter by using **to make a long story short**.

Credits

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