

Catch Word #112 – To get dolled up

Transcript

Harp: Hello everyone. This is Harp.

Maura: And your pal Maura.

Harp: And we're here at Culips English Learning Podcast, bringing you another great episode.

Maura: And don't forget to check out our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com. And there you can check out all our past episodes. You can also become a member and when you become a member, you have access to transcripts, more detailed explanations, and quizzes for all our episodes.

Harp: And at the website, we have over 200 episodes you can check out. And also check us out on Facebook. There's a lot of stuff going on there.

Maura: It's the best place to contact us because it's the best place to leave us a message and we'll always be checking it out.

Harp: Yes, exactly. And today we're going to do be doing a Catch Word episode and that's where we take some expressions, we explain them, and we give you some examples.

Maura: That's right. Today we're going to look at expressions that are used to talk about people who are **dressing up**, which means that they're **dressing** in formal clothing like ball gowns or just dresses and suits, for men, or tuxedos.

Harp: Exactly. Today we're going to talk about when people **dress up**.

Maura: Right. So, our first expression is **to get dolled up**.

Harp: Yes, **to get dolled up**.

Maura: I'll say it one more time, slowly: **to get dolled up**.

Harp: Yes. So this expression means when someone **dresses up** a little **fancy**, either they wear a dress, or if they're a guy they wear a suit, they **dress** a little bit **fancier** than they normally do.

- Maura: Right. And, like we said, it could be a suit or it could be a dress, but really you could use this to talk about anyone who is **dressing more fancy** than they normally do. So if someone always wears ripped jeans and dirty shirts, just wearing some nice, clean, new clothes might be enough to use this expression.
- Harp: You don't have to be wearing a ball gown to use this expression.
- Maura: Right. Especially for women, they do their hair and they do their makeup, but for guys too, they might get a haircut or do their hair a special way. They might also pay extra attention to shave their face.
- Harp: Yes, definitely.
- Maura: When I think of this expression, **to get dolled up**, I always think of dolls.
- Harp: Yes, exactly. Because for a doll, you can **dress them up** and put new, **fancy** clothes on them.
- Maura: Right. And dolls normally look pretty and cute, so I make that connection when I think of this expression.
- Harp: Yeah, definitely.
- Maura: So **to get dolled up** means that a person has gotten **dressed** in a **more fancy** style than they normally wear.
- Harp: Yes.
- Maura: So this expression, **to get dolled up**, has some variations. What I mean is you could also say **to be dolled up**. We'll go more into that in our Learning Materials. So, let's give a first example with **to get dolled up**.
- Harp: Let's do it.

- Maura: Are you ready to go to the gala yet?
- Harp: Yup, just give me a second. I'm just spraying on some perfume and some final **little touches**.
- Maura: OK, I'll be waiting for you out here.
- Harp: OK. I'm ready to go.
- Maura: Oh, wow. Look at you **all dolled up**.
- Harp: Yeah. It's fun getting **dressed up** for a night out.

Maura: Yeah, it is fun. Well, let's get going.

Harp: All right, let's go.

Maura: So, there is an example where somebody was **dolled up**. They were wearing some **fancy** clothes, in this case to go to a gala. And a gala is a kind of special evening where people do wear nice clothes to attend.

Harp: Yup. Do you remember when we went to the gala together?

Maura: I do remember.

Harp: We both **got dolled up**.

Maura: We did. And it's true, I don't normally get **dressed up**, so it is fun to have the opportunity to wear something a little bit **fancier**.

Harp: Yeah, definitely. We'll post a picture of that on Facebook.

Maura: Yeah. OK, let's do one more example with **getting dolled up**.

Harp: Let's do it.

Harp: So, how did the first date go yesterday with Bob?

Maura: Well, I don't know. I don't know if it went well.

Harp: Why not?

Maura: I don't know. I'm just not sure. The end of the date was strange.

Harp: Really?

Maura: Yeah. Well, we got together, we met each other, and we went to a restaurant and you know, the conversation was good and I tried to get **all dolled up**, but I don't know if he liked me.

Harp: Hmm. I think he'd be crazy if he didn't like you.

Maura: I guess we'll see if I hear from him.

Harp: Yes. I'm sure you will.

Maura: So there is another example where people use the expression **to get dolled up**.

Harp: Yeah. And, again, it just means when someone **dresses up** a bit **fancier** than they normally do.

- Maura: Right. And for women, when you **get dolled up**, you often would do your makeup maybe a bit differently or wear a bit more than you normally do.
- Harp: Yeah, or do your hair in a different way.
- Maura: Exactly. So, let's look at another expression that also means that someone is getting more **dressed up** in a formal way.
- Harp: OK. So our next expression is **to get all gussied up**.
- Maura: Yes, **to get all gussied up**, which is another very funny-sounding expression that means that someone has changed their style and clothing for the night and they're trying to look their best.
- Harp: Yeah, exactly. When someone **dresses up** a little **fancier**, maybe wears a dress or maybe wears a suit, you can say **to get all gussied up**.
- Maura: Right. So, let's give an example with this expression now.

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| Harp: | OK. So for next week, for our girls' night out , I think that you should come over before. |
| Maura: | Yeah, OK. So I'll come over early and we'll maybe have something to drink, we'll get all gussied up , and then we'll head out maybe around 10 o'clock? |
| Harp: | That sounds like so much fun. It's a plan . |
| Maura: | All right, great. |

- Maura: There's an example with **to get all gussied up**, meaning to **dress** formally, like we said, for women you could also do your hair and makeup and try to look your best. And in this example, the expression was used when two friends were planning to go out at night, so they were gonna try to look their best, wear something special for that evening out.
- Harp: Yeah, exactly. Let's give one more example.

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| Harp: | Did I tell you that I'm going to the marketing awards this weekend? |
| Maura: | No. I didn't know. You going for work? |
| Harp: | Yeah our company won a marketing award and I'm going to be accepting it. |
| Maura: | Oh, wow. Are you gonna have to get all gussied up ? |
| Harp: | I think so. It's an awards ceremony so I'll probably go buy a new dress tomorrow. |

Maura: Cool. If you need someone to go shopping with you, let me know.

Harp: I think I'll **take you up on that**.

Maura: So, there is an example where another person is **getting all gussied up**. This time for an awards ceremony, which is usually a place where people get **dressed up**.

Harp: Definitely. If you're going up in front of a crowd, you wanna look nice, so you would definitely **get gussied up**.

Maura: All right. So, we've looked at **to get dolled up**, **to get gussied up**, and the last expression is **to get decked out**.

Harp: Yes, **to get decked out**.

Maura: And this, like the others, means that a person is trying to look their best so they're wearing very nice clothes and, like we said too, they might also do their hair, trying to look good.

Harp: Yeah, a little bit more makeup.

Maura: The one thing that's different about this expression is that **to get decked out** can also be used for other things, not just a person's style of clothing. We'll explain more in our Learning Materials how you can use **to get decked out** in other ways to talk about other things. But for this episode, we're just gonna use **to get decked out** to talk about a person's style of clothing.

Harp: Yes, exactly. So **to get decked out** is when someone goes a bit **fancy** for maybe an event or for a date, they get a little bit more **dressed up**, they do their hair up, they do makeup, maybe they wear **fancy** shoes.

Maura: Yeah. OK, now let's give an example with **to get decked out**.

Harp: Let's do it.

Maura: Have you seen Jim's latest pictures on Facebook?

Harp: No, I haven't. I'm not his friend on Facebook.

Maura: He was looking really good.

Harp: Oh, yeah?

Maura: Yeah. His brother got married last month, and so in the photos **he's all decked out**, nice hair style going on. He looked pretty good.

Harp: Interesting. He **got decked out** for the wedding.

Maura: Yeah. You should check out the pictures.

Harp: You'll have to show me.

Maura: So there's an example where somebody **got decked out**. In this case, it was Jim and he **was decked out** for his brother's wedding, which makes sense. That's an occasion where you would get **dressed up**.

Harp: Yeah, definitely. For weddings, most people get **dressed up** more than normal. Let's give one more example with **to get decked out**.

Maura: OK.

Harp: So my niece Zarah is going to her first school dance this Friday.

Maura: Oh, that's fun. I remember doing that when I was young.

Harp: Yeah. I took her dress shopping yesterday because she said she needed something new for this.

Maura: Oh, that's cute. I remember **getting all decked out**, getting ready for the big night.

Harp: Yeah. It was a lot of excitement **back in the day**, so it was fun going shopping with her yesterday.

Maura: Yeah. Well, I hope she has a good time. Let me know.

Harp: I will, for sure.

Maura: There is one more example with **to get decked out**, meaning to put on some nice clothes, do your hair, try to look your best.

Harp: Exactly.

Maura: So, let's go over the expressions we looked at today one more time.

Harp: All right. Well, we started with **to get dolled up**.

Maura: Right. And then we talked about **to get all gussied up**.

Harp: Yup. And we finished with **to get decked out**.

- Maura: Right. So all of these expressions are talking about a person's look, including their style of clothing and their hair and maybe makeup. But the one difference is that **to get decked out** can also be used to talk about things other than people.
- Harp: Yeah. So make sure you sign up for the Learning Materials, so you can check out the other ways you can use **to get decked out**.
- Maura: All right, cool.
- Harp: And remember to check out Facebook and we'll put up a picture of Maura and me **all dolled up** for the gala we went to.
- Maura: That was already a few years ago. We need to find another special event to go to.
- Harp: Yeah. I love **dressing up**, so we need to go find another gala.
- Maura: Yeah, let's get invited to one.
- Harp: Sounds good.
- Maura: OK. And also don't forget to go to our website, Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com, and find out what it takes to become a member.
- Harp: That's it for us today. Bye everyone.
- Maura: Good bye.

Detailed Explanation

To dress/to dress up/to dress down

To dress simply means to put on clothes. The most common ways to talk about **dressing** are to use **to get dressed** or *to put on*. When someone uses **to dress**, it often sounds formal and a bit unnatural, especially when talking about yourself, but it sounds more natural when talking about **dressing** someone else, like a baby or small child.

Here are three examples to see this difference:

Greg: Come on, we've gotta get going!

Anna: OK. I'm just **getting dressed**.

Nathan: What are you doing in there?

Justin: I just need to put on a sweater because I think it's going to be cold today. I'll be out in a second.

Joanna: I just need **to dress** my daughter and then we can go for a walk.

Peter: No problem. I'll wait here.

To dress up means to wear nicer or fancier clothes than you normally do. People might get **dressed up** for work or a special event. **To dress down** is to wear more casual clothes than you normally wear. It is the opposite of **to dress up**. A formal office or a school with a uniform might have a special day when people can **dress down**. This means that they can wear casual clothes, like jeans and T-shirts.

To get dolled up

To get dolled up means to wear fancy clothes and to style your hair. For women, this may also mean that you wear more makeup than usual. As we say in this episode, think of a doll wearing pretty clothes, with nicely styled hair and a beautiful face.

Some people wear formal clothes and style their hair more often than others. People might do this because of where they work or because they prefer this style. In this case, you would not use this expression to talk about them, or the other expressions, *to get gussied up* and *to get decked out*. We only use these expressions when the person does not normally dress this way. The person must look more formal than they usually do.

Here's one more example with this expression:

Matthew: Look at you, **all dolled up**! You look great.

Emma: Thanks! I have to go to a formal dance tonight.

There are some variations with **to get dolled up**. We can also say **to be dolled up** and **to get/be all dolled up**.

Fancier/more fancy

Comparisons in English can cause some confusion. There are two likely reasons for that. The first reason is that some adjectives take an *-er* on the end, and others use *more*. The second reason is that native English speakers often misuse these.

Fancy as a comparative is **fancier**. The general rule is that for most adjectives ending in *-y* the *-y* is replaced with *-ier* to make the comparative form:

Fancy → **fancier**

Busy → busier

Silly → sillier

For most other adjectives with two or more syllables, the word *more* is added before the adjective without changing the adjective itself:

Thoughtful → more thoughtful

Frightening → more frightening

Beautiful → more beautiful

For most adjectives with one syllable, *-er* is added on the end, or just *-r* if the word already ends with an *-e*:

Tall → taller

Young → younger

Large → larger

Maura's use of **more fancy** in this episode is technically incorrect, but native English speakers often make these mistakes with comparatives and they usually go unnoticed. Some people even believe that the rules will eventually change because of so many people misusing comparatives. We'll see.

The final touch(es)

The final touch is the last small and important detail of a creation that someone has been working on. We most often say **to put the final touch on something**. This expression can be used in singular or plural forms (**the final touch** or **the final touches**).

In this episode, Harp uses this expression to talk about getting dolled up. She has been getting ready to go out and now she is almost finished, but is just putting on **the final touches**. In this case, this might mean that she is just finishing one last part of her makeup or making sure that her hairstyle is staying in place. In this way, Harp is creating her look and making sure it looks perfect.

This expression can be used to talk about many different kinds of creations. Here are a couple of examples with **final touches**:

Megan: How's that table that you've been working on coming along?

Shannon: It's actually almost done. I just have to put **the final touches** on it this weekend.

Eduardo: I'm almost done my essay that's due tomorrow. I just have to put some **final touches** on it tonight, you know, edit it one more time to see if I made any errors.

Samantha: Sounds good. I'm glad you'll have it done on time.

To get all gussied up

To get all gussied up is another one of the expressions that can be used to talk about getting dressed up fancier or more formally than we normally do. This expression can also be used without the word *all*: **to get gussied up**. We can also say **to be gussied up**.

Here's one more example:

Michelle: Wait till you see him. He's **getting all gussied up** for tonight.

Olivia: I can't wait to see! What time will he get here?

A girls' night out

A girls' night out is a night when a group of female friends goes out together at night, often to a bar or a dance club. This kind of special night is most popular with women who do not go out with friends very often, usually because they are in relationships or have children. There are no males invited to **a girls' night out**. In fact, there are no actual girls at **a girls' night out**, but women in their mid 20s to possibly their late 30s.

To head out

We have so many expressions in English that mean *to leave*. **To head**, used with the direction or place you are going, can be used to mean to go in that direction. **To head out** means that you will move in the direction of outside, which is to leave the place you are. We can also say **to head in**, **to head towards**, or **to head to a specific place**.

This is a more indirect and so in some situations a more polite way of saying that you are going to leave. For example, instead of saying, "I think we're going to leave now," you can say, "I think we're going **to head out** now."

Here's another example with **to head out**:

Harriet: I should really **head out** now, but thanks so much again for dinner.

Cynthia: Oh, it's too bad you have to leave so soon. Have a good night.

It's a plan

This is a little expression that means just what it says. After people have made a plan and have agreed on the details, someone can confirm everything by saying **it's a plan**. This means that everything has been agreed upon and everyone will do what they have planned.

In one of the dialogue examples in this episode, after the plans are made for the girls' night out, including what they are going to do and what time there are going to do it, Harp says **it's a plan**. This means that everyone has agreed and everything is confirmed. It does not have to be a plan for an event, but can be about anything that is planned and organized.

Here are another couple of examples with **it's a plan**:

Jennifer: So, you buy the food and I'll get the music and refreshments? Then let's all meet at my place.

Doug: Sure. **It's a plan**.

Karen: I'll do some research this weekend and then send you whatever I have.

Marcus: OK, then I'll put all the information together and we can meet up and discuss what we've found.

Karen: Sounds good. **It's a plan**.

Some variations include, **that's a plan** or **sounds like a plan**.

You going for work?

Sometimes when speaking, native English speakers cut out words. Here's an example where this happens in this episode. In a dialogue example, Maura asks Harp if she is going to the gala for work. She does this by saying, "**You going for work?**" In this case, she drops the *Are* that should be at the beginning of the question. It should be "Are you going for work?"

Remember that this is not acceptable in written English, especially in formal writing. This is most common in speech only. The intonation stays the same, but the first verb *to be* is dropped from the beginning of the sentence.

Here are a couple more examples:

Cliff: I heard there's a party tonight. **You going?**

Michael: Yeah, I think I'll probably go.

Jolanta: I talked to a few people about the brunch tomorrow, including Joan.

Daniel: **She going?**

Jolanta: Yep, she'll be there.

To take someone up on something

People use this expression, **to take someone up on something**, after a person has offered. When you accept someone's offer, you **take them up on the offer**. In a dialogue example in this episode, Maura offers to go shopping with Harp. Harp says that she's going **to take Maura up on that**. This means that Harp will accept Maura's offer to go shopping with her.

Here are a couple more examples with this expression:

Denis: Can I **take you up on the invitation to stay at your place** next weekend?

Victoria: No problem. Let me know when you get into town and I can even pick you up.

Colleen: Any time you need help with your son's math homework, I can help. I did really well in math class in high school.

Sawyer: Thanks! We may just **take you up on that**.

To get decked out

Here's the final expression from this episode that is used to talk about someone who is dressed fancier than usual. Just like the other two expressions, we can say **to get/be decked out** or use *all*: **to get/be all decked out**. The difference between this expression and the others is that **to get decked out** can also be used to talk about other fancy things, not just people.

For example, you could describe part of a home as **decked out** after there have been renovations and improvements made to its appearance. You might also use this expression if enhancements have been made to a car to make it more flashy or useful.

Here are another couple of examples with **to get decked out**.

Jane: My kids are **getting all decked out** for Halloween this year. They've been working on their costumes since the summer.

Stella: Wow. I can't wait to see them.

Brian: Come out to the backyard. That's where the party is going to be.

Kelly: Nice decorations! Your backyard **is so decked out**. It looks great.

Back in the day

This is an expression that people use to talk about something from the past, often from when the person was younger, during their adolescence or childhood. When someone uses the expression **back in the day**, this means that the person looks back at this time in a positive way. **Back in the day** can be replaced with *in the past*, but this expression is neither positive nor negative.

In an example dialogue, Harp uses this expression to talk about when she was younger and went to school dances. Because Harp uses this expression, we know that this is a time that she remembers fondly. **Back in the day** is a newer version of the expression *in the good old days*.

Here's another example with **back in the day**:

Frank: Do you remember **back in the day** when we used to play outside all evening until it was dark?

Carla: For sure. Those were good times.

Quiz

1. Which of the following means to dress more casually?

- a) to dress down
- b) to dress up
- c) to dress
- d) to play dress up

2. Which of the following is NOT correct?

- a) fancy
- b) more fancy
- c) fancier
- d) fanciest

3. Which of the following would you likely NOT put final touches on?

- a) a leaf you're admiring
- b) a painting you're creating
- c) a face you're putting makeup on
- d) a piece of furniture you're building

4. Arnold: Sorry, we have to _____ so early, but we have to wake up early tomorrow morning.

Please fill in the blank.

- a) come in
- b) walk out
- c) get in
- d) head out

5. Irene: You going to work tomorrow or are you still sick?

In the question above, which word is missing?

- a) at
- b) are
- c) is
- d) gonna

6. Jack offers to babysit his sister's children. His sister takes him up on it.

What does this mean?

- a) His sister needs him to babysit.
- b) His sister accepts the offer for him to babysit.
- c) His sister does not need him to babysit.
- d) Jack does not know how to take care of children.

7. Which expression can also be used to talk about things other than people?

- a) to get dolled up
- b) to get decked out
- c) to get gussied up
- d) to get dressed up

8. Which of the following expression(s) can you use with *all*?

- a) to get all gussied up
- b) to get all dolled up
- c) to get all decked out
- d) all of the above

9. What does it mean when someone uses the expression *back in the day*?

- a) They enjoyed the past.
- b) They did not enjoy the past.
- c) They do not remember the past.
- d) none of the above

Answers:

1.b 2.b 3.a 4.d 5.b 6.b 7.b 8.d 9.a