

Real English Conversations: Don't step in the dog doo! (Part 4 of 4).

Introduction

Hi! Lori here, welcoming you to another episode of Real English Conversations from betteratenglish.com.

In today's conversation, which is part four of four, my British friend Michael and I wrap up our lengthy conversation about the pros and cons of dogs, dog ownership, and dog owners. Warning: some of the vocabulary we deal with in this episode is a bit vulgar, so if you are sensitive or easily offended I suggest you stop listening now.

As always, you can find the vocabulary notes and full transcript of this podcast on our website, www.betteratenglish.com.

OK, here we go!

Conversation Transcript

Lori: And some people... I swear, you know, dogs I think are great. It's dog owners that can be just really **lame** sometimes.

Michael: Mmm. Mmm..

L: There's a forest outside where I live here, where I like to go running and walking and... people, it's a great place. I don't see many people, but there are a lot of dog walkers who like to go there as well.

M: Yes.

L: And they don't want to keep their dogs on a leash a lot of times. They let their dogs kind of run wild, and a lot of them don't really have control over their dogs.

M: Right, right.

L: And the dogs can be quite aggressive sometimes. But then, dog owners are really weird. Sometimes they are so protective of their dogs and they think their dogs can do no harm.

M: Oh dear.

L: So they actually get angry at you, walking along telling you that, "Oh, it's *because* you're afraid, that's why he [the dog] is acting like that." And it's like...

M: "Of course I'm afraid. He's a giant dog with **slavering** fangs." Yeah.

L: Running up barking at me, not looking friendly. Of course I'm going to be afraid, you know? And I don't think it's my responsibility as, you know, a person wanting to use the jogging trail — that it's my responsibility to **tailor** my behavior to the comfort of dog owners, because it actually is their responsibility to keep their dogs on a leash, unless they have, you know, total control.

M: I completely agree. I was going to say, do you remember the time I was over in Sweden, and we were having a picnic in the park. And there were the young teenagers that were there, and they had a dog with them. And the dog was running loose, and the dog was coming over and sticking its nose in our picnic bag. And you had to tell these folks, "Excuse me...your dog...?" They were **oblivious** to the whole thing.

L: The dog was just doing what dogs do.

M: He was looking for food.

L: Yeah, of course, he is going to be interested in food. So it is up to owners to make sure they keep their dogs under control when they're, you know, in the public space.

M: Exactly.

L: It is not up to, you know, the other people there to deal with the dog. I think.

M: You know, we **shooed** the dog away, more than once.

L: But he kept coming back.

M: Well we had some good **chow!**

L: Oh we did. Oh man, those pies that Sabina had made! Oh, my god! That is really annoying when dog owners are inconsiderate and don't understand that it's really their responsibility to make sure their dog is under control.

M: Right, yeah, it is part of the responsibility of being a dog owner, I think.

L: Exactly. And I'm sure...most are fine. Most people do a good job, but it's the few people who are idiots who kind of spoil it for everybody else.

M: Sure. It gives the dog a bad name as well. I mean, if you have a few bad encounters with a dog that's having trouble it can **put you off**.

L: Exactly. And that can also...if, you know...there's some people who are deathly afraid of dogs, who don't, you know, who have a hard time with obviously friendly dogs.

M: Oh goodness! I was **terrified** of dogs when I was a little boy. Absolutely terrified. And that was just through a couple of dogs that lived locally. There was a house that I had to walk past on the way to school, and there were these two dogs that would, they would bark and they would run at you. They weren't tied up either.

L: Yeah. I think every kid has a house like that, or memory of a house like that, from when they were walking to school. I know I do.

M: Right! It's something that sticks with you for a long time.

L: Yeah, because when you're little, you know, I was walking to school on my own...I think from the time I was in first grade. So I would have only been five or six years old! Because it wasn't far, it was only a few blocks and it was quiet, **residential** streets, so I walked to school by myself or with the little neighbor kids. But when you're that little, a big dog is really big and really scary. And you haven't...you're not aware enough to tell the difference between a dog that's just running up to inspect you and **check you out** and a dog that is really, actually aggressive.

M: Right.

L: So it's really scary.

M: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. And I think it can stay with you for a long time as well.

L: Yeah.

M: And I guess some people never... in fact, my sister is still very, very scared of dogs, you know? And she's nearly 40. She was like that when she was a child and she just never **got over it**.

L: I have to say I'm **wary** of dogs. Little dogs, it's no problem because even if they were horribly aggressive you could always just kick them like a football. And you'd be OK.

[laughter]

L: But it's the big dogs, you know, dogs that weigh as much as I do. Those, those can be quite scary.

M: That would be hard to **tackle**, a dog like that.

L: Yeah. And just...its going to be much more serious being attacked by a dog like that than by some little **yappy** terrier trying to bite your heels, you know?



prototypical yappy little dog

M: **Ankle biters.** [laughs]

L: [laughs] Yeah, ankle biters. Isn't that a slang word for kids? Ankle biters...

M: I don't know. I guess, maybe.

L: Or like an informal colloquial word, for... Like the word "**rug rats**", we have the word rug rats in American English for kids, which I think is a horrible word. But yeah, ankle biters, I think I've heard that before as sort of a **disparaging** term for little children.

M: Well, maybe that's not something you should use for a little dog then, I don't think.

L: No, it's very descriptive though, little ankle biters! Ankle **nippers!**

M: Well you could go further, "**crotch sniffers.**"

[laughter]

L: Crotch sniffing dogs are the worst! Oh my God, oh I hate crotch sniffing dogs!

[laughter]

M: There is some film I remember seeing with some kid complaining about some dog. His parents say, "What's wrong with the dog?" This poor little kid balefully cries out, "He is a crotch sniffer!"

[laughter]

L: I know. I have seen the same film, but I don't remember which one it is. But it's funny... Crotch sniffers are...it's so embarrassing. I know it is just what dogs do. They sniff each other's, you know, **nether regions.**

M: They *clean* each other's nether regions.

L: Oh no, let's not go there! I want to keep this one clean!

M: OK.

L: That is just what dogs do. That and the ones that **hump** your leg. That is so embarrassing especially when you're over at someone's house.

M: Especially when they won't let go.

[laughter]

L: They **latch on** and won't let go.

M: Shaking, shaking your leg. And then... [laughter]

L: Yeah and oh, that's so embarrassing because you know everyone is thinking about sex at that point. I mean you can't have a dog



Humping dog and the resulting embarrassment

humping your leg without people at least momentarily, you know, everyone is thinking about **doing it**. That just makes it so embarrassing.

M: Right.

L: It's such a delicate situation.

[laughter]

M: Oh dear. Right. Yeah. Yes. It's difficult to remain cool.

L: When a dog is humping your leg!

M: Trying to look cool and dangerous when there's a dog humping away at your leg. Yeah.

[laughter]

L: Yeah. Oh my god, that's such an embarrassing situation... Anyway I think we've reached the point where, again, it can only **go downhill** from here.

M: OK. Let's quit where we are!

Final Words

Thanks for listening. This concludes our four-part series on the good, the bad and the ugly of dogs, dog ownership, and dog owners. We'll be back again with a new episode as soon as we've had time to record some juicy new topics. We welcome requests from our listeners, so if you'd like to request a topic just visit our website, www.betteratenglish.com, where you'll find everything you need to get in touch with us. This is Lori from BetterAtEnglish signing off until next time. Bye for now!

[Vocabulary notes on next page]

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Vocabulary notes

lame	In this context, an informal word meaning <i>stupid, unpleasant</i> .
slavering	If an animal is <i>slavering</i> , liquid is coming from its mouth because of excitement or hunger.
tailor	To change, adapt, or adjust something to fit a particular situation.
oblivious	To be <i>oblivious of something</i> means to be completely unaware of it.
shooed	To <i>shoo</i> someone or something means to scare it away from you.
chow	An informal term for food.
put you off	If something <i>puts you off</i> , it causes you to dislike it.
terrified	Extremely frightened.
residential	A <i>residential</i> area usually contains single-family dwellings and/or small apartment buildings/flats.
check you out	To inspect, to examine.
got over it	To <i>get over</i> something means to recover from it.
wary	To be <i>wary</i> of something means to be careful of it because you don't trust it.
tackle	To <i>tackle</i> someone is to knock them over with the force of your body, as in American football.
yappy	If a dog <i>yaps</i> it barks rapidly with a high pitch, like many small breeds of dog do.
ankle biters	Disparaging (see below) term for either a small dog or a small child.
rug rats	A usually disparaging (see below) term for a small child, generally still at the crawling stage.
disparaging	To <i>disparage</i> is to be critical in a way that shows that you don't respect or value the person or thing you are criticizing.
nippers	See <i>ankle biters</i> above. To <i>nip</i> is to bite lightly.
crotch sniffers	The <i>crotch</i> is the part of the body where the legs join at the top. To <i>sniff</i> is to smell something by inhaling air through the nose.
nether regions	A euphemism for one's sexual organs.
hump	[vulgar] To <i>hump</i> means to have sex with, or when used about animals, to mate.
latch on	If you <i>latch on</i> to something, you grab hold of it and don't let go.
doing it	To <i>do it</i> is a euphemism for <i>to have sex</i> .
go downhill	To <i>go downhill</i> means to get worse.