



## Vegan Vocabulary Lesson

Hello, this is AJ Hoge. Welcome to the vocabulary lesson for “Vegan.” Now this conversation is about the difference between vegan and vegetarian. Kristin and Joe are both vegans. And they talk about how they became vegans... why they became vegans and the difference between the two. What is the difference?

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**Kristin says, “You know, we’ve been talkin’ about vegetarianism but being a vegan is a whole different story.”**

*Okay, vegetarian or vegetarianism... the noun means, to not eat meat. Vegetarians do not eat meat. They don't eat fish. They don't eat the flesh of animals. It means they don't want an animal to be killed for their food. So if the animal was killed, they will not eat it. That's vegetarian. Now vegan is more hardcore. Vegan is more strict. A vegan also does not eat meat but in addition a vegan also does not eat dairy. No milk, no cheese, no eggs, no product that comes from an animal. So vegan is more strict, more hardcore. Vegan... no dairy, no cheese, nothing from an animal. Vegetarian is just no meat. But vegetarians do eat cheese. But they do not eat meat. That's the difference between a vegetarian and a vegan. Alrighty. Next...*

**So Kristin says, “You know, we’ve been talkin’ about vegetarianism but being a vegan is a whole different story.”**

*A whole different story. That's an idiom, a common phrase. Whole different story just means a very different situation. So being vegan is very different than being vegetarian.*

**Okay and Joe says, “Yeah, you’re right, I mean it’s a totally different ball game, for sure.”**

*Totally different ball game. Similar meaning it means, it's a very different situation. It's a totally different situation or it's a totally different experience. So being vegan is a totally different ball game from being vegetarian. It's a totally different situation from being vegetarian.*

**Kristin says, “Yeah, you’ve been one for a while now.” And Joe says, “Yeah, I have, y’know, it was a little more difficult when I first started. Y’know, but at this point I don’t even have to think about it. It’s just second nature.”**

*So being vegan is now second nature for him. Second nature means totally natural. Something that is effortless. If you say it's second nature, it means it's effortless. You don't need to try hard, you can do it effortlessly. Hopefully speaking English will be second nature for you and it will be effortless for you.*

**Kristin says, “Yeah, I can imagine. You know Chris that you met a couple of weeks ago?” And Joe says, “Yeah, I know who you’re talking about.”**



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*Okay, so my friend Chris, Chris Moses, who is the Director of Flow English, by the way. Anyway Chris Moses visited me in San Francisco and he met Kristin and he also met Joe. So Kristin is talking about him, talking about Chris Moses now. And Chris, he's a vegetarian and used to be a vegan.*

**And Joe says, "Yeah I know who he is." And Kristin says, "Yeah, he's the first vegan I ever met after I graduated college. I wasn't even a vegetarian and he was already a vegan."**

*Chris was already a vegan at that time. So Kristin met Chris for the first time. Chris was a vegan.*

**And Joe said, "Did you know what a vegan entailed at that point?"**

*What a vegan involved? What was required at that time?*

**And she said, "Oh, I don't remember but probably not. I probably learned a lot about it through him."**

*Or from him.*

**"Because at that time it was not popular." And Kristin says, "No. It wasn't, but..." She says, "I will say, actually, there were two vegetarian restaurants in Athens where I was going to college. And Athens being like San Francisco, had a lot of restaurants with vegetarian options."**

*So Athens is a town. Athens is a town. It's called Athens, Georgia. It's a town in the United States in the state of Georgia. A college town, university town. And it's similar to San Francisco meaning it's a very liberal place. A very progressive, liberal kind of place. And so it had a lot of vegetarian options at restaurants.*

**"And there was a vegan restaurant that popped up."**

*Popped up means suddenly appeared. Or there was suddenly a vegan restaurant in the town.*

**And then y'know, they talk about that and Kristin says, "Actually, though, I didn't even think the food was that good."**

*So Kristin didn't like the food at this vegan restaurant in Athens.*

**And then Joe said, "Yeah, people go in there they get turned off to the idea."**

*To be turned off to something means it turns off your desire to do something. It stops your desire. So he's saying sometimes people go to a restaurant, a vegetarian restaurant or a vegan restaurant. If the food is bad, then that person will be turned off. They will be turned off to the idea of being vegetarian. In other words, if they go to a restaurant, a vegetarian restaurant and the food is bad, then they don't want to become*



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*vegetarian. They think oh vegetarian food is terrible, it tastes bad. So they are turned off by the restaurant. Their desire to be vegetarian is turned off.*

**Okay, and Kristin says, "Yeah, and also the restaurant was just kind of a little pretentious, which doesn't go over well in a college town."**

*Okay, to be pretentious means kind of snobby. Right, it means you think you are better than other people. Snobby is a, is a, kind of a very casual way to say that word. Pretentious is a little more formal way to say it. But it's the idea of being snobby. It means you think you are better than other people. And that doesn't go over well in a college town. To go over well means to be popular. Or to be liked. So people in college towns are more relaxed. They don't like snobby stuff. They don't like pretentious stuff. Pretentious places don't go over well. They're not popular in college towns.*

**And Joe says, "Yeah, you're right." He said, "I remember when I first made the switch to being a vegan."**

*The first change to being vegan.*

**He said, "I didn't do it cold turkey. I didn't go cold turkey."**

*To go cold turkey... very common phrase, common idiom. To go cold turkey or cold turkey means to stop suddenly and completely. To make a change. Usually stop doing something suddenly and completely. You hear this a lot with smoking. Someone wants to quit smoking. And they say, "I quit smoking cold turkey." It means one day they stopped completely. Not gradually, right. It's the opposite of gradually. Gradually means little by little, maybe one day you smoke less, the next day less, the next day less, the next day less, and finally you stop completely. That's gradually. Cold turkey means one day you completely stop. Yesterday you were smoking two packs of cigarettes every day. Today, zero. So he didn't go cold turkey with vegan. It means he didn't stop eating meat and dairy suddenly, completely one day. He did it gradually.*

**He said he was dating someone and she decided she wanted to cut dairy out of her diet. She wanted to stop eating dairy. They were already vegetarians. And he said, "I found it wasn't really... I wasn't really eating much dairy at all to begin with."**

*So basically, already he was not eating a lot of dairy. He already was eating very little.*

**So then he thought, "Well, maybe now it's time to give it a shot."**

*To give something a shot means to try something. You say, "I will give it a shot." means I will try to do it. So to give it a shot, give something a shot means try to do it. I will give vegan a shot means, I will try to be vegan.*



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**So he said, “I decided to give it a shot and he thought let’s see how it goes.”**

*Let’s see how it happens. Let’s see what happens.*

**And then after five days he realized he wasn’t missing the dairy. He didn’t miss it. So he decided, “Hey, I’m going to do it, I’m going to turn over a new leaf. I’m not gonna eat dairy anymore.”**

*Another common idiom here, to turn over a new leaf. To turn over a new leaf means to make a positive change. It means to change your life in a positive way. So he decided to turn over a new leaf. He decided to make a positive change in his life. Okay, so to turn over a new leaf. To make a positive change.*

**Kristin says, “Oh, interesting.” And Joe said, “Yeah, it went really well.”**

*Being vegan went well. It was easy.*

**And he said, “Y’know, I found something interesting?” She says, “What?” And he says, “When you tell somebody that you have a vegan diet, and if they’re not a vegetarian they usually ask, ‘Well, what do you eat?’”**

**And, he says y’know, what I realized? The reason they say that is because they look at their own diet.**

*They look at their own eating.*

**“And then they remove the meat.”**

*They think, oh okay, if I don’t eat meat.*

**“And then they remove all the dairy.”**

*And they say okay, now I won’t eat dairy.*

**“And then there’s nothing left.”**

*So in other words, most Americans eat meat and dairy mostly. Most Americans do not eat a lot of fruit. Most Americans do not eat a lot of vegetables. Most Americans do not eat a lot of rice. What do they eat? Most Americans eat a lot of meat. A lot of cheese, a lot of dairy. And so many Americans don’t understand the idea of vegan. They think oh my god, what do you eat? They don’t understand about vegetables and rice and fruit and other things. So he’s saying sometimes people are confused. Americans especially are confused by the idea of being vegan.*



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**Okay and Kristin says, "Yeah." And he says, "Y'know, they don't have... there's nothing to eat that they... Because what they currently eat isn't meat or dairy, then there's nothing for them. Because that's what they eat mostly." And then Joe says, "How 'bout you?"**

*You know, why did you decide to be vegan?*

**And he says, "When I first met you, you weren't doing the vegan diet all that long."**

*It means when they first met, she had only been a vegan for a short time. Maybe only a couple of months. She started being vegan a couple of months before she met Joe.*

**And Kristin says, "No, I wasn't."**

*I wasn't a vegan for a long time when we met.*

**She says, "In fact, I think that AJ at one point had decided he wanted to be vegan and so that started making me think."**

*It made her consider the reasons that I wanted to be a vegan.*

**And she says, "I love cheese. I love dairy." And she thought oh I gave up seafood. I am a vegetarian. That's enough. I'm not giving up dairy.**

*So in the beginning she thought no, I don't want to be a vegan. I can't do it. I already am a vegetarian. It's too much. I can't give up dairy also.*

**But then... She going... She said she went to Korea. Lived in Korea. She lived in Japan for a short time. She lived in Thailand for two and a half years. She says, "Y'know, the dairy is pretty non-existent in those diets."**

*In those countries they don't eat a lot of dairy. Korea, Japan, Thailand. Dairy is not so popular. Certainly not like the United States, not like Europe.*

**So she said, "I was basically already vegan in those countries."**

*She was vegetarian and then naturally those diets don't include much dairy. So she became almost vegan just because she was living in those countries.*

**And she said, "I did give it up for those times. I did give it up, I did quit eating dairy at the times I was**



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**living in those countries.” But then she would come back to America and she did it for a few stints while she was there but she would find herself going right back into eating cheese and drinking milk.**

*What she is saying is that when she was living in other countries she could be vegan. It was possible. It was easy. But when she returned from her time, from her stints. Stint means a short time doing something. When she returned from her time in Asia, then she began to eat cheese and milk again when she was in the United States.*

**And Joe says, “That seems to be the nemesis of anyone going vegan. Because vegetarians like cheese.”**

*So he’s saying cheese is the nemesis. Nemesis means enemy. Someone or something that is your enemy. So cheese is the enemy of vegans because a lot of vegetarians love cheese. So it’s difficult for them to quit eating cheese. So it’s kind of a joke that cheese is the enemy of the vegetar-... vegan because you have to fight your desire to eat it. At least in the beginning.*

**And Kristin says, “Oh my god, yes. For me it was...”**

*So yes, cheese was her nemesis.*

**She says, “Also it was cheese, yogurt, sour cream.”**

*So she liked all of these things.*

**And Joe then later says, “I also did like cheese.” And he said, “I loved brie and brie and baguettes and brie and crackers.”**

*Brie is a kind of cheese, a type of cheese. Brie. So he liked this type of cheese called brie. And a baguette is a kind of bread. So a baguette is a kind of bread and brie is a kind of cheese.*

**But then Joe says, “Y’know, there are non-dairy cheeses out there.”**

*Out there just meaning in the world. So there are non-dairy cheeses in the world.*

**“And they taste pretty good. And they’re a good substitute.”**

*So now he’s a vegan. So he can eat non-dairy cheeses.*

**And then finally Kristin says, “Yeah. Well, I’ve been a vegan now for about a year.”**





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*When she met Joe she had been a vegan for four months at that time, at that point. And now it's been one year.*

**But she said when she met Joe, after being vegan for four months, she thought she was in over her head because it was really tough in the beginning.**

*To be in over your head means to be in a situation that is too difficult for you. It comes from swimming. Imagine you're in the water. If the water is over your head, it means you're drowning right. It means you're going to die. The water is over your head you can't breathe. It is a very tough, bad situation for you. So that's what it means. To be in over your head means to be in a very terrible situation. It means to be in a situation that is too difficult for you. So she thought, oh my god, vegan is too difficult for me. I'm in over my head.*

**She said, "And maybe I would have quit. I don't know if I would still be doing it if I hadn't met you."**

*So Joe helped her to remain vegan.*

**Because she said, "You opened me up to a lot of restaurants here in The Mission."**

*To open someone up to something... Opened me up to a lot of restaurants. It means introduced me to a lot of restaurants or helped me enjoy a lot of restaurants. You opened me up to a lot of restaurants. You helped me enjoy a lot of restaurants here in The Mission. The Mission is a neighborhood in San Francisco. It's just part of San Francisco, the city, The Mission neighborhood where they live.*

**So she says, "Now I have a lot of vegan options."**

*A lot of vegan choices in this neighborhood.*

**And she said, "I didn't have that available to me downtown where I used to live."**

*So her new neighborhood has more vegan stuff, more vegan restaurants than downtown San Francisco.*

**She says, "Plus you cook and I didn't cook. So you're teaching me how to cook vegan."**

*Joe is teaching her how to cook vegan food.*

**She said, "I was eating mostly, I was mostly eating out at restaurants. Not eating at home. I was just maybe making rice and then having avocado and nuts and salad. That was my main staple."**

*A staple, when you talk about food, like my staple food or a staple food, it means the food you always eat.*



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*For example: Rice is a staple food in Japan, Thailand, Korea, Taiwan, most of Asia. In most of Asia, rice is a staple food. Japanese people, Asian people, Korean people mostly eat rice every day. In Europe maybe bread, maybe bread is a staple food. People eat it all the time, almost every meal. Maybe beans would be in Mexico or Central America or South America, maybe beans are a staple food. You eat beans almost every meal in those countries. So a staple food. The most common food.*

**She says, “Even when I was eating out, I thought I could go to a Mexican restaurant, for example, and just tell them no cheese”. And she thought she was safe.**

*She thought to be a vegan she could just say no cheese.*

**But then she realized she was getting guacamole that had sour cream in it.**

*So she realized oh, even if I say no cheese, sometimes they have sour cream. Guacamole is avocado sauce.*

**Okay and then finally at the end Joe says, “Well, suffice to say...”**

*Enough to say.*

**“I was really glad to meet you as well. And one reason was it was great to finally meet someone who was on the same page as me as far as diets go.”**

*Again, on the same page means sharing the same idea. Agreeing about something. We are on the same page means we agree about this. We share the same idea. So they both share the same idea about being vegan. They both agree about being vegan. They are both on the same page.*

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Okay, and that is the end of the vocabulary lesson for “Vegan.”