

Learn English With Photos 18 – Shop Names Revisited

Hello and welcome to episode eighteen of Learn English With Photos. My name is Jeffrey Hill and I'm going to be using some photos I've taken to help you improve your English vocabulary and practise your speaking skills.

In episode five of Learn English With Photos, I showed some photos of typical High Street shops and explained the plays on words and references which are used in their names. In this episode, I'm going to do the same thing but with a different set of shops. As usual, in the final part of the lesson, you'll have the chance to answer some questions about the topic.

First up is a pet shop called **The Dog House**, which sells a variety of domesticated animals, and also pet supplies such as food and accessories. Of course, a dog is a popular pet, but if you are **in the dog house**, you are in trouble because someone is mad at you. For example, "John ended up in the dog house after forgetting his wife's birthday."

Face Value is an appropriate name for a shop which sells eyewear and cosmetics, but if you **take something at face value**, you believe that it is what it appears to be, without questioning it. For example, "You shouldn't take anything she says at face value."

The Plaice for Fish & Chips is a fish and chip shop in my home town of Plymouth. If you heard the name spoken aloud, you would almost certainly think that the second word was spelt P-L-A-C-E, but the spelling has been changed to "P-L-A-I-C-E" because plaice spelt this way is a type of flat sea fish which is very popular in the UK. In fact, plaice (P-L-A-I-C-E) and place (P-L-A-C-E) are what are called homophones, words have the same pronunciation but which are spelt differently.

Sew Enchanting is another example of a shop name which uses a homophone. If you heard the name rather than seeing it written, you would no doubt think that the first word was spelt S-O. But since the shop sells sewing machines and accessories, the spelling has been changed to 'sew' (S-E-W). By the way, an old-fashioned name for a shop which sells small articles for sewing, for example needles, pins, cotton and buttons, is a haberdashery.

The Original Upper Crust Bakery features a play on words. The crust is the hard outer surface of a loaf of bread, but the term **upper crust** is used to describe people who belong to the highest social class. For example, "Jack the Ripper was believed by some to be a member of the upper crust". The name gives the bakery an upmarket image.

Smarty Pants is a dry-cleaner's in Portsmouth, UK. A **smarty pants** is a person who thinks they are very clever and likes to show people this in an annoying way. In fact, the shop name would be more appropriate in the USA, where they use the word "pants" to mean "trousers". In the UK, pants are what men wear under their trousers – not the sort of garment one usually has dry-cleaned!

This café cum restaurant is called **Mixed Fillings**. The usual expression is "mixed feelings" with a double E. If you **have mixed feelings about** something, you feel both pleased and not pleased about it at the same time. They've changed "feelings" to "fillings" because fillings are what you put inside a

sandwich, cake, pie, etc., which are the sort of thing they sell here. However, you might argue that for someone to have mixed feelings about the café is not a particularly desirable sentiment from the café's point of view ...

Herr Kutz is a jokey play on the word “haircuts”, which are what ladies and gentlemen come to this hairdresser for. “Herr” is the German equivalent of “mister”, and “Kutz” sounds like it could be a German name. I’m not sure whether the hairdresser is in fact German – probably not. Note that a gents hairdresser is also called a barber, a profession traditionally associated with the red and white striped pole you can see in the window on the right.

High and Mighty is a shop which specializes in clothing for big or tall men (sizes 9 to 15, it says in the window). “High and mighty” is also a fixed expression used to describe someone who behaves as though they are more important than other people, as in “She’s much too high and mighty to mix with ordinary people like us.” Note that you should not use “high” to refer to people who are above average height. You should say “He’s very tall”, not “He’s very high”. You can describe a mountain or building as “high”, though.

Sweatshop, which describes itself as “the nation’s favourite running retailer”, sells shoes, clothing and accessories for people who go running. Now, when you run, you are likely to sweat, or perspire, so the name makes sense on one level. But “sweatshop” is also a term for any working environment considered to be unacceptably difficult or dangerous. The name clearly plays on that association, which is slightly surprising since the connotations are almost entirely negative. Note that the slogan “We know running” means “We know about running” as opposed to “We know how to run.”

Shuropody is one of the UK's Leading Total Foot Care Providers. Their stores offer a unique combination of Footwear, Foot Care and Podiatry all under one roof. As you may have guessed, I took that description from their website. The name is a mash-up of “shoe” and “chiropody” — chiropody being the area of medicine that deals with people's feet. The use of two different colours on the shop sign gives you a clue as to the name’s origin.

Americandy is a sweet shop, or confectionery shop. The name “Americandy” is a blend of the words “American” and “candy”, candy being the American word for sweets. Do you see the slogan “It’s fabulicious” on the sign? “Fabulicious” isn’t a word you’ll find in the dictionary. It’s a made-up word combining “fabulous” and “delicious”.

The Whole Hog is a shop in Lyme Regis, Dorset, which sells specialty roast sandwiches. In fact, they just have two types of sandwich: roast pork and apple, and roast chicken and stuffing. Hog is another word for pig, which is where we get pork from, but the name also references an English saying. If someone **goes the whole hog**, they do something as completely as possible. For example, “If you are redecorating one room, why not go the whole hog and paint the entire house?”

Down to Earth is a shop selling organic and natural products in Dorchester, also in the county of Dorset. If you describe someone as “down to earth”, you mean that they are practical and sensible. The word “earth” also has associations with the environment and nature, which explains the play on words.

Cheery Buys is a discount store in Plymouth. A discount store is a shop which sells products at prices lower than those asked by traditional retail outlets. The name Cheery Buys is a play on the English

expression “cheery-bye”, which is an informal British English alternative to “goodbye” or “cheerio”. “Buy” (B-U-Y) and “bye” (B-Y-E) are homophones (same pronunciation, different meanings), and “cheery” means “happy”. Note that “buy” is used here as a noun, meaning something that you buy.

Rice Up Wholefoods sells local, organic and fairtrade food products. The name is a play on the expression “rise up” — though “rice”, the grain, and “rise”, the verb, are not pronounced in exactly the same way. To rise up is to rebel or revolt against authority. This fits in with the store’s logo — a raised fist full of rice, which resembles a black power salute (without the rice, of course).

The final shop is a coffee house called **Bryter Latte** once again in Dorchester. The name is a play on “Bryter Layter”, the title of an album recorded in 1970 by British folk singer-songwriter Nick Drake. They’ve just changed “layter” to “latte”, which is a type of coffee made with milk. The album title was already a pun on an expression often used in weather forecasts, but spelt B-R-I-G-H-T-E-R — L-A-T-E-R. I’m not sure why they chose this name for the coffee shop — perhaps it’s the type of music they play in the shop, or maybe the owner just likes Nick Drake.

Right that’s enough shop names, let’s move on to the next part of the lesson where you get to do some speaking. I’m going to ask you a series of questions relating to shops and shopping. I suggest you pause the video to give yourself time to answer. And don’t just reply with ‘yes’ or ‘no’ — try to make your answers as detailed as possible. OK, let’s begin.

Vocabulary

- ❑ **bakery** — a place where bread and cakes are made and/or sold
- ❑ **barber** — a person whose job is to cut men's hair and sometimes to shave them
- ❑ **candy** — American term for sweets or confectionery
- ❑ **chiroprody** — the area of medicine that deals with people's feet
- ❑ **clothing** [U] — clothes, especially a particular type of clothes, e.g., warm clothing
- ❑ **confectionery** [U] — sweets/candy, chocolate, etc.
- ❑ **cosmetics** — substances that you put on your face or body to make it more attractive
- ❑ **crust** — the hard outer surface of bread
- ❑ **dry-clean** — to clean clothes using chemicals instead of water
- ❑ **dry cleaner's** — a shop where you take your clothes to be dry-cleaned
- ❑ **enchanting** — attractive and pleasing
- ❑ **eyewear** — things worn on the eyes such as glasses or contact lenses
- ❑ **fair trade** — trade which supports producers in developing countries by paying fair prices and making sure that workers have good working conditions and fair pay
- ❑ **filling** — food put inside a sandwich, cake, pie, etc.
- ❑ **garment** — a piece of clothing
- ❑ **haberdashery** — a shop selling small articles for sewing (needles, pins, cotton, etc.)
- ❑ **haircut** — the act of cutting somebody's hair
- ❑ **hairdresser** — someone whose job is to cut people's hair
- ❑ **hog** — American word for pig
- ❑ **homophone** — word that is pronounced like another word but has a different spelling or meaning
- ❑ **latte** — drink made by mixing espresso coffee with hot, frothy milk
- ❑ **loaf** — bread in a long, round, or square shape that you cut into slices
- ❑ **mighty** — very large, powerful, or impressive
- ❑ **needle** — small thin metal tool with a sharp point used for sewing
- ❑ **organic** — produced or practised without using artificial chemicals
- ❑ **owner** — person who owns something
- ❑ **pants** — a piece of underwear; American English for trousers
- ❑ **pet** — an animal, a bird, etc. kept at home for pleasure
- ❑ **pin** — a short thin piece of stiff wire used for fastening together pieces of cloth when sewing
- ❑ **plaice** [U] — flat sea fish
- ❑ **pork** [U] — meat from a pig
- ❑ **pun** — humorous use of a word (or similar sounding words) with two meanings
- ❑ **retail outlet** — a store that sells things
- ❑ **rice** — short, narrow white or brown grain grown on wet land in hot countries
- ❑ **sew** — to use a needle and thread to make stitches in cloth
- ❑ **sewing machine** — a machine that is used for sewing things that are made of cloth
- ❑ **spelling** — the way that a particular word is written
- ❑ **supplies** — the things needed for a particular purpose, e.g., food or medicines
- ❑ **sweat** — liquid that forms on your skin when you are hot
- ❑ **sweatshop** — a place where people work for low wages in poor conditions
- ❑ **sweet** — a small piece of sweet food made with sugar. The usual American word is candy.
- ❑ **upmarket** — designed for people who have a lot of money
- ❑ **wholefoods** — food that does not contain artificial substances and has not been treated to make it look better or last longer

Questions

1. What does it take to make a shop successful?
2. Do you think that there is a future for small shops like the ones in this video? Why, or why not?
3. What is something that you have bought recently that was a good bargain?
4. What is something that you have bought recently that cost a lot of money?
5. Do you like buying presents for people? Why, or why not?
6. Napoleon described England as a “nation of shopkeepers”. What do you think he meant by that?
7. Give an example of something that you regret buying.
8. What’s your opinion of organic foods?
9. What impact has online shopping had on high street retailers?
10. What’s your favourite shop and why?