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Episode #353

Summer or Winter?

It Depends Where You Live

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Hi! I'm Georgiana, and I'm back with a new episode of the *Speak English Now* podcast—the podcast that helps you speak English fluently, with no grammar and no textbooks.

Before we start, you can get the transcript at SpeakEnglishPodcast.com/podcast

And if you enjoy this episode, please share it with your friends. Thank you!

It's the end of August, and in many countries in the **Northern Hemisphere** — like the U.S., Canada, France, Spain, or Japan — that means one thing: summer is ending. The days are still hot, but soon the air will cool down, the leaves will change color, and fall will begin.

But here's the funny part: not everyone in the world is saying goodbye to summer. In the **Southern Hemisphere** — places like Brazil, Argentina, South Africa, or Australia — August doesn't mean the end of summer at all. It actually means the end of winter. In September, people there are ready to welcome spring.

I notice this every year with my students. While people in Europe or North America are saying, *"Wow, summer went by so fast!"* my Brazilian students are telling me, *"Finally, winter is over!"* We always laugh about it together. Same date on the calendar, completely different seasons. Sometimes I even joke,

"Can you send me some of your sunshine? I'll send you my cold weather in exchange."

Why is it like this? Well, the Earth is divided into two halves: the **Northern Hemisphere** and the **Southern Hemisphere**. And the seasons are opposite.

- When it's summer in **Europe**, it's winter in **Argentina**.
- When it's winter in **Canada**, it's summer in **Australia**.

Isn't that fascinating? Just imagine: you get on a plane in Madrid in July. It's hot, and everyone's eating ice cream. Then you land in Buenos Aires, Argentina — and suddenly it's winter. People are wearing jackets, drinking hot coffee, and complaining about the cold.

Or picture the opposite. You're freezing in Canada in January, walking through snow, and then you fly to Brazil. A few hours later, you're standing on the beach, drinking coconut water, while your friends back home are still shoveling snow. That contrast always makes me smile.

And it gets even better — some people actually use this to their advantage. If you love the heat, you can “chase summer” around the world. Imagine celebrating Christmas on the beach in Brazil or Australia. Santa Claus in sunglasses, eating ice cream. Meanwhile, in Europe or North America, people are by the fireplace, drinking hot chocolate. Same holiday, two completely different pictures.

Of course, if you prefer cooler weather, you can do the opposite. If you're tired of the heat in Brazil in December, just fly to Europe and enjoy cooler days.

So when my students in Brazil tell me, *“It's so hot today!”* while my students in Germany say, *“It's freezing here!”* I just laugh and think: this planet is really funny.

Now, let's practice with a **point of view story**.

Point of View-Story 📖

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Let's start!

Emery traveled all the time. Honestly, he didn't even unpack his suitcase. He just lived out of it. Sometimes he joked that his suitcase was his real house.

It was the end of August, and he was in Madrid. It was still summer, really hot. People were eating ice cream, kids were outside playing, and Emery was sweating in the sun. He thought:

"Okay, I'll pack light. Shorts, T-shirts, flip-flops, sunglasses. ¡Perfecto!"

Well... maybe not so *perfecto*.

After a long flight, he landed in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He was tired, a little dizzy from jet lag, but he was sure it was still summer. He stepped off the plane in his flip-flops with a big

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smile on his face. But immediately he noticed something strange. People in the airport were wearing jackets. Some even had scarves. Emery laughed to himself:

“Wow... Argentiniens must really like jackets. It’s summer!”

He walked outside with an ice cream in his hand. And that’s when it happened. A big cold wind hit him right in the face. His smile disappeared, and the ice cream fell straight to the ground.

He actually froze. He looked around and saw children with backpacks walking home from school, and older people drinking hot coffee instead of cold lemonade. Something didn’t feel right.

A woman walking by stopped and said, “¿Todo bien?” (Everything ok?)

Emery shivered. “Why is it so cold? It’s summer!”

The woman laughed. “Summer? No, no. In Argentina it’s winter. September is spring for us.”

Emery blinked. “Winter? But I just left summer in Spain!”

“Exactly,” she said. “Spain is in the Northern Hemisphere. Argentina is in the Southern Hemisphere. Opposite seasons.”

Emery opened his suitcase right there on the sidewalk. Inside: five pairs of shorts, three swimsuits, and not a single jacket. People were staring, and he wrapped himself in a beach towel like it was a blanket.

He jumped into a taxi. The driver looked at him, smiled, and said:

“¿Vas a la playa?” (Going to the beach?)

Emery sighed. “No. To the mall. I need socks.”

As the taxi drove away, Emery shook his head and thought: “Next time, I’ll check two things before I pack — the season... and the hemisphere!”

The same story told from Emery's viewpoint:

Hi! I’m Emery, I’m from the U.S., and I travel all the time. Honestly, I don’t even unpack my suitcase. I just live out of it. Sometimes I joke that my suitcase is my real house.

It’s the end of August, and I’m in Madrid. It’s still summer, really hot. People are eating ice cream, kids are outside playing, and I’m sweating in the sun. I think:

“Okay, I’ll pack light. Shorts, T-shirts, flip-flops, sunglasses. ¡Perfecto!”

Well... maybe not so *perfecto*.

After a long flight, I land in Buenos Aires, Argentina. I’m tired, a little dizzy from jet lag, but I’m still sure it’s summer. I step off the plane in my flip-flops with a big smile on my face. But immediately I notice something strange. People in the airport are wearing jackets. Some even have scarves. I laugh to myself:

“Wow... Argentini-ians must really love jackets. It’s summer!”

I grab an ice cream at the airport and walk outside. And that's when it happens. A big cold wind hits me right in the face. My smile disappears, and the ice cream falls straight to the ground.

I freeze. For real!

I look around and see children with backpacks walking home from school, and older people drinking hot coffee instead of cold lemonade. Something doesn't feel right.

A woman walking by stops and says, "¿Todo bien?" (Everything okay?)

I shiver. "Why is it so cold? It's summer!"

The woman laughs. "Summer? No, no. In Argentina it's winter. September is spring for us."

I blink. "Winter? But I just left summer in Spain!"

"Exactly," she says. "Spain is in the Northern Hemisphere. Argentina is in the Southern Hemisphere. Opposite seasons."

I open my suitcase right there on the sidewalk. Inside: five pairs of shorts, three swimsuits, and not a single jacket. People are staring, and I wrap myself in a beach towel like it's a blanket.

I jump into a taxi. The driver looks at me, smiles, and says:

"¿Vas a la playa?" (Going to the beach?)

I sigh. "No. To the mall. I need socks."

As the taxi drives away, I shake my head and think: "Next time, I'll check two things before I pack — the season... and the hemisphere!"

And that's the end of this short Point of View story.

Poor Emery thought it was still summer because he had just left Spain, but of course, in Argentina it was winter. Same date on the calendar, two completely different worlds.

That's why I use these stories. Instead of memorizing boring grammar rules, you actually *live* the story in different tenses and points of view. It's more fun, and honestly, it sticks much better.

So here's my advice: don't just listen once. Go back, listen again, and try to answer out loud.

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Georgiana

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