EPISODE 379

Kind vs. Nice

Full transcript · mini-story · vocabulary review

Today, we're going to talk about two very common words in English: **kind** and **nice**.

Many students think they mean the same thing. And yes, sometimes they are similar. But there is a small difference.

A **nice** person is pleasant, polite, and friendly.

A **kind** person cares about others and tries to help.

So, **nice** is often about manners.
Kind is more about the heart.

For example, imagine someone smiles and says:

"Have a nice day!"

That person is being nice.

But now imagine someone sees that you are tired and says:

"Sit down. I'll help you."

That person is being kind.

A person can be nice without being very kind. And of course, a person can be both nice and kind. That is the best combination.

Let's look at more examples.

If someone says "please," "thank you," and smiles, we can say:

"He is nice."

If someone helps an old woman carry her bags, we can say:

"He is kind."

If your coworker speaks politely to everyone, she is nice.

If your coworker notices that you are stressed and offers to help, she is kind.

So remember:

Nice is often about being pleasant and polite.
Kind is about caring and helping.

Now, here's something interesting about the origin of these words.

The word **kind** is connected to ideas like family, nature, race, or being part of the same group. It is related to the word **kin**, which means family or relatives. So, in a way, when you are kind, you treat another person almost like family. You don't see them as a problem. You see them as a human being.

But the word **nice** has a very surprising history.

A long time ago, *nice* did not mean pleasant or friendly. It came from a Latin word meaning "ignorant" or "not knowing." Later, in English, it had meanings like foolish or silly. Then, over time, the meaning changed. Today, when we say, "She is a nice person," it is a compliment.

English is interesting because words change. A word that was negative in the past can become positive today.

Now, let's use these words naturally.

You can say:

“She’s really nice.”

This means she is pleasant and friendly.

You can also say:

“That was very kind of you.”

This means the person did something thoughtful or helpful.

Another useful phrase:

“It was kind of you to help me.”

This sounds sincere and warm.

For example:

“Thank you for listening to me yesterday. That was very kind of you.”

This sounds deeper than just saying:

“That was nice.”

Both are correct, but **kind** feels more personal when someone really helps you.

Now, here’s another important example.

We normally say:

“It was nice to meet you.”

This is a very common and natural phrase. You can use it after meeting someone for the first time.

But we don’t say:

“It was kind to meet you.”

That sounds strange.

Why? Because meeting someone is usually a pleasant social situation. So we use **nice**.

“It was nice to meet you.”
“It was nice talking to you.”
“It was nice seeing you again.”

But when someone does something helpful, thoughtful, or caring, **kind** is stronger.

“That was very kind of you.”
“It was kind of you to call me.”
“It was kind of you to help.”

So, **nice** works well for polite and pleasant situations.

Kind works better when someone helps, cares, or shows compassion.

Mini-Story

Speaking Practice

Answer the questions aloud with short and quick responses. Repeat the Mini-Story several times to improve your speaking and listening.

Let’s start!

Tom was a very nice man.

Was Tom a rude man?
No, Tom wasn’t a rude man. Tom was a very nice man.

What kind of man was Tom?
Tom was a very nice man.

Every morning, Tom smiled and said, “Good morning!” to everyone in the office.

Did Tom smile every morning?
Yes, Tom smiled every morning.

What did Tom say?
Tom said, “Good morning!”

Where did Tom say it? On the beach?
Tom said it in the office.

Everyone thought Tom was nice.

Did everyone think Tom was rude?
No, no. Not rude. Everyone thought Tom was nice.

What did everyone think about Tom?
Everyone thought Tom was nice.

But one day, Tom saw his coworker Lisa carrying five heavy boxes.

Who did Tom see?
Tom saw his coworker Lisa.

What was Lisa carrying?
Lisa was carrying five heavy boxes.

Were the boxes heavy or light?
Heavy. The boxes were heavy.

Tom smiled and said, “Good luck!”

Did Tom help Lisa?
No, Tom didn’t help Lisa. He only smiled and said, “Good luck!”

Was Tom nice?
Yes, Tom was nice. He smiled and said something pleasant.

But was Tom kind?
No, Tom wasn’t very kind. He didn’t help Lisa.

Then Ben arrived.

Who arrived?
No, no. Ben arrived.

Did Ben arrive or disappear?
Ben arrived. He didn’t disappear.

Ben didn’t say much, but he took two boxes from Lisa.

Did Ben talk a lot?
No, Ben didn’t talk a lot.

What did Ben do? Dance?
No, no. Ben didn't dance. He took two boxes from Lisa.

Was Ben kind?
Yes, Ben was kind because he helped Lisa.

Lisa smiled and said, “Thank you, Ben. That was very kind of you.”

Did Lisa thank Ben?
Yes, Lisa thanked Ben.

What did Lisa say?
Lisa said, “Thank you, Ben. That was very kind of you.”

Tom looked confused.

Who looked confused? Ben?
No, no. Tom looked confused.

Why was Tom confused?
Tom was confused because he thought smiling was enough.

Then Lisa said, “Tom, you are nice. But Ben was kind.”

What did Lisa say?
Lisa said, “Tom, you are nice. But Ben was kind.”

Who was nice? Ben?
No, not Ben. Tom was nice.

Who was kind?
Ben was kind.

The next day, Tom saw Lisa with more boxes.

When did Tom see Lisa again?
Tom saw Lisa again the next day.

What did Lisa have? More bananas?
No, no. Not more bananas. Lisa had more boxes.

This time, Tom didn’t just smile.

Did Tom only smile this time?
No, Tom didn’t only smile this time.

What did Tom say?
Tom said, “Let me help you.”

Was that kind?
Yes, that was kind of Tom.

Lisa smiled and said, “Now you are nice and kind.”

What did Lisa say?
Lisa said, “Now you are nice and kind.”

What is the lesson?
The lesson is this: being nice is good, but being kind is deeper.

Did Lisa marry Tom or Ben?
Well, we don’t know. But we do know this: Ben was kind, and Tom learned an important lesson.

That’s the end of this mini-story.

Today, you learned the difference between **nice** and **kind**.

A nice person is pleasant and polite.
A kind person cares and helps.

So, try to be nice.
But when you can, be kind too.

Review

Vocabulary from This Episode

Review the most useful words and expressions before listening again.

01 **kind** caring and helpful.	05 **sincere** honest and real.
02 **nice** pleasant, friendly, or polite.	06 **compassion** caring about someone's problem or pain.
03 **manners** polite behavior.	07 **kin** family or relatives.
04 **thoughtful** showing that you care.	

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