ENGLISH STORY PODCAST

Don't Waste Your Life

A gentle English conversation about goals, habits, time, and starting today

EPISODE 10 | LEVEL A2-B1

Listen and read with Mia and Jake. Then practise useful English for talking about goals, using time well, and building small habits.

Today's Small Win
Choose one thing you keep saying “someday” about. Spend just ten minutes on it today, then say: “I made the most of today.”

Episode Guide

What you will learn

• How to talk about goals, time, and habits.

• How to use “spend time” and “I’d rather”.

• Why a small habit can be stronger than a big plan.

• Encouraging phrases for taking one small step today.

Word Box

waste	to use something badly or not use it well
goal	something you want to do or become in the future
habit	something you do again and again, almost without thinking
progress	getting better little by little

Say It Like This

“I want to make the most of today.”

“It's never too late.”

“One step at a time.”

“I don't want to waste my time.”

“Let's start today.”

Listen & Read Transcript

Read along while you listen. Audio-performance tags have been removed for easier reading.

JAKE	Mia, I have a big plan. Someday, I will learn the guitar.
MIA	Someday? Jake, you said that last year.
JAKE	And the year before that.
MIA	Hello everyone, and welcome to the English Story Podcast. I'm Mia.
JAKE	And I'm Jake, the man who has a guitar, and who says someday.
MIA	Today's episode is about one idea. Don't waste your life. But don't worry, this is not a scary episode. It's a gentle one.
JAKE	By the end, you'll know how to talk about your goals, your time, and your habits in English. And you'll have one small step to take today.
MIA	And before we start, a quick tip. You can read the full transcript of this episode on our website, and listen to the audio while you read. The link is in the description, along with our free ebooks.
JAKE	Lots of valuable help, and all of it is free. So make yourself comfortable, get a cup of tea, and just listen to us talk.
MIA	Let's start with a question. When you think about the word waste, what do you think of?
JAKE	I think of throwing something away. Like wasting food, or wasting water.
MIA	Yes. And we can waste time, too. When we use our time for things that don't matter to us, we say we are wasting it.
JAKE	But here is something important. Resting is not wasting. Relaxing, sleeping, and having fun are good for you.
MIA	That's very true. Wasting time is not about rest. It's when we keep saying someday, and never begin.
JAKE	Okay, it's time for our Word Box. These are four useful words for today. Listen, and then repeat after us.
MIA	The first word is waste. To waste something means to use it badly, or to not use it well.
JAKE	Waste. For example, I don't want to waste my money on things I don't need.
MIA	The next word is goal. A goal is something you want to do or to become in the future.
JAKE	Goal. For example, my goal is to speak English with confidence.

MIA	The next word is habit. A habit is something you do again and again, almost without thinking.
JAKE	Habit. For example, drinking tea in the morning is my favorite habit.
MIA	And the last word is progress. Progress means getting better, little by little.
JAKE	Progress. For example, I'm making progress with my English, and I'm very proud.
MIA	Let's say them one more time. Waste.
JAKE	Waste.
MIA	Goal.
JAKE	Goal.
MIA	Habit.
JAKE	Habit.
MIA	Progress.
JAKE	Progress.
JAKE	Great job, everyone. You will hear these words again in the story.
MIA	Now, let's talk about the first big idea. Everybody has the same amount of time each day.
JAKE	Twenty four hours. Rich people, busy people, famous people, all the same.
MIA	So the question is not, how much time do I have? The question is, how do I use it?
JAKE	I like that. It's a kind question, not a hard one.
MIA	Let's practice some phrases for this idea. In English, we often say, "make the most of." It means to use something well.
JAKE	For example, "I want to make the most of today."
MIA	Or, "Let's make the most of this weekend."
JAKE	And it works with time, a trip, a lesson, or a chance.
MIA	The second big idea is about the word someday. Someday is a lovely word, but it can be a trap.
JAKE	That one is for me, and my guitar.

MIA	When we say someday, we imagine a better time in the future. But that time never comes by itself.
JAKE	So what can we say instead?
MIA	We can say, "Let's start today." Or, "I'll start with ten minutes." Small and real is better than big and someday.
JAKE	I think that's the secret. Don't wait for a perfect day. Take a small step on an ordinary day.
MIA	Exactly. And there is a very famous English phrase for that. "It's never too late."
JAKE	It's never too late. I love that. You can start learning at twenty, at forty, at seventy.
MIA	And the third big idea is about habits. A habit is stronger than a big plan.
JAKE	Why is that?
MIA	Because a big plan needs a lot of energy. But a small habit needs only a little, and you can do it every day.
JAKE	For example, ten minutes of English every morning is better than three hours once a month.
MIA	Yes. And English has a nice phrase for this. "One step at a time."
JAKE	One step at a time. That means, you do not need to do everything now. Just do the next small thing.
MIA	Let's put these ideas together in a short conversation. Jake, imagine I'm your friend, and I ask about your goal.
JAKE	Okay. Let's begin.
MIA	Hi, Jake. What's your goal this year?
JAKE	Hi, Mia. My goal is to play three songs on the guitar.
MIA	That's a great goal. When do you want to start?
JAKE	Someday, maybe.
MIA	Jake. We said we don't say someday.
JAKE	Sorry. I want to start today.
MIA	Much better. What small step can you take?
JAKE	I can practice for ten minutes after dinner.
MIA	That sounds perfect. And what will you do if you feel tired?

JAKE	I'll practice for five minutes. A short practice is better than no practice.
MIA	I agree. Progress is progress, even when it is small.
JAKE	Did you notice? We talked about a goal, a habit, and a small step, and the language was simple.
MIA	And it sounded kind and real.
MIA	Now let's learn a very useful verb for this topic. Spend.
JAKE	We spend money, but we also spend time.
MIA	Yes. And here is a simple pattern. "I spend time with my family." Or, "I spend time on my hobbies." Or, "I spend an hour reading every night."
JAKE	And when we use a verb after spend, we add ing. "I spend too much time watching videos."
MIA	That is a very honest sentence.
JAKE	It is. And here is another one. "I'd rather spend my evening learning something new."
MIA	I'd rather means, I prefer. It's a lovely phrase. "I'd rather walk than take the bus." "I'd rather stay home than go out."
JAKE	So, let's try a little conversation about time. Mia, how do you spend your evenings?
MIA	Well, I usually cook dinner, and then I read for half an hour. But sometimes I spend too much time on my phone.
JAKE	Me too. What would you like to change?
MIA	I'd rather spend that time on something I enjoy, like reading or going for a walk.
JAKE	That's a good goal. Maybe we can help each other.
MIA	Yes. We can say, "Let's put our phones away for twenty minutes, and do something we love."
JAKE	Notice how kind that sounds. It is not a rule. It is an invitation.
MIA	And that is the feeling of this whole episode. Not guilt, not pressure, just a small, kind choice.
JAKE	And now it's time for our segment called Say It Like This.
MIA	Here are five phrases you can use every day. Repeat after us. I want to make the most of today.
JAKE	I want to make the most of today.
MIA	It's never too late.

JAKE	It's never too late.
MIA	One step at a time.
JAKE	One step at a time.
MIA	I don't want to waste my time.
JAKE	I don't want to waste my time.
MIA	Let's start today.
JAKE	Let's start today.
MIA	Very good. Now you have five small phrases, and each one helps you speak about your goals and your time.
JAKE	And now it's time for our Mini Story. This is a short story with today's new words inside it.
MIA	Our story today is about a woman called Lina. Lina worked in an office, and she had a quiet dream. She wanted to speak English well, so she could travel and meet new people.
MIA	But every night, Lina said the same sentence. "I'm too tired. I'll start someday." Months passed. Then, one evening, she saw a photo of a trip she wanted to take, and she felt a little sad. She asked herself, "Am I wasting my time?"
MIA	That night, Lina made a very small decision. She said, "Just ten minutes." She opened an English podcast, and she listened. She didn't write anything. She didn't study hard. She just listened, and she repeated one sentence out loud.
MIA	The next day, she did it again. And the day after that. After one week, ten minutes had become a habit. After one month, she understood more, and she felt more confident. She was making real progress, one step at a time.
MIA	A few months later, Lina took her trip. At the airport, a stranger asked her a question in English, and Lina answered, and she smiled. She remembered the night she said, "Just ten minutes."
JAKE	I love that story. Ten small minutes, and a big change.
MIA	And the best part is that Lina didn't need a perfect plan. She only needed to begin.
JAKE	Did you notice our words? Waste, goal, habit, and progress were all in the story.
MIA	That is why we tell stories. When you hear new words inside a story, they are easier to remember.
JAKE	Can you remember what small decision Lina made?
YOUR TURN	Pause and answer aloud.

MIA	She said, "Just ten minutes." Small, simple, and powerful.
JAKE	And now it's time for our last segment, called Your Turn.
MIA	Okay, now it's your turn. I will ask a question, and you will answer in your head, or out loud.
JAKE	Ready. Question one. What is one goal you have this year? Start with, "My goal is to."
YOUR TURN	Pause and answer aloud.
MIA	Here's one idea. "My goal is to speak English with more confidence."
JAKE	Question two. What is one small habit you want to build? Start with, "I want to."
YOUR TURN	Pause and answer aloud.
MIA	"I want to listen to English for ten minutes every day."
JAKE	Question three. What is one thing you keep saying someday about? How can you change it into a small step today?
YOUR TURN	Pause and answer aloud.
MIA	"Someday, I'll learn to cook. Today, I'll watch one short recipe video."
JAKE	Question four. Complete this sentence. "I don't want to waste my time on."
YOUR TURN	Pause and answer aloud.
MIA	"I don't want to waste my time on worrying about small mistakes."
JAKE	And one last question. If you made the most of today, what would you do?
YOUR TURN	Pause and answer aloud.
MIA	If you answered even a little in English, then you just practiced talking about your goals. Congratulations.
JAKE	Before we finish, let's remember our four words. Waste, goal, habit, and progress.
MIA	And our favorite phrases. "It's never too late." And, "One step at a time."
JAKE	And remember, you don't need to change your whole life today. A small step is enough.

MIA	Before we go, here is Today's Small Win. A small win is a very small task that you can finish today, and it makes you feel good.
JAKE	Today's Small Win is this. Choose one thing you keep saying someday about. Then spend just ten minutes on it today. Set a timer, and begin.
MIA	And when the ten minutes are finished, say, "I made the most of today." Say it out loud, and smile.
JAKE	Now, we have a question for you in the comments. What is the one thing you will start today? Write one sentence, and start with, "Today, I will."
MIA	We read the comments, and we love to see your sentences. So please write them, even if you feel shy. You can do it.
JAKE	And remember, you can read the full transcript of this episode on our website, and listen to the audio while you read. The link is in the description, with our free ebooks.
MIA	If this episode helped you today, please give it a like, and share it with a friend who is learning English. And if you haven't subscribed yet, please subscribe to the English Story Podcast, so you can find our next episode.
JAKE	Thank you so much for spending this time with us.
MIA	Keep listening, keep practicing, and remember, your English is already better than it was yesterday.
JAKE	Take care, everyone.
MIA	And Jake, go and play your guitar.
JAKE	Okay, okay. Ten minutes. Starting today.
MIA	Goodbye, and see you in the next episode.

Practice Exercises

1. Match the Word

1. waste 2. goal 3. habit 4. progress

A. getting better little by little B. something you want to achieve C. use something badly D. something you do regularly

2. Complete the Sentences

1. I want to make the _____ of today.
2. My _____ is to speak English with confidence.
3. Ten minutes of practice can become a daily _____.
4. I am making _____ with my English.
5. I spend too much time _____ videos.
6. It is never too _____ to begin.

3. Build Your Small-Step Plan

My goal is to _____.

Today, I will spend ten minutes _____.

I want to build the habit of _____.

One small step I can take is _____.

4. Choose the Best Answer

1. You want to begin a goal.
A. I'll start with ten minutes. B. Maybe someday forever.

2. A friend thinks it is too late.
A. It's never too late. B. Give up now.

3. You want steady improvement.
A. One step at a time. B. Everything today.

4. You prefer reading to using your phone.
A. I'd rather read. B. I rather reading.

Speaking Practice

5. Practise Your Answers Aloud

1. Say one goal you have this year.

2. Describe one small habit you want to build.

3. Say what you spend too much time doing.

4. Say what you would rather do instead.

5. Turn one “someday” plan into a step for today.

6. Say how you will make the most of today.

6. Listening Check

1. What does Jake want to learn? _____
2. How long will Jake practise after dinner? _____
3. What small decision does Lina make? _____
4. What happens after one month? _____

Answer Key & Sample Answers

1. Match the Word

1-C, 2-B, 3-D, 4-A

2. Complete the Sentences

1. most 2. goal 3. habit 4. progress 5. watching 6. late

4. Choose the Best Answer

1-A, 2-A, 3-A, 4-A

6. Listening Check

1. The guitar 2. Ten minutes 3. She says “Just ten minutes” and listens to an English podcast 4. She understands more and feels more confident

Useful Goal and Habit Phrases

- I want to make the most of today.
- It's never too late.
- One step at a time.
- Let's start today.