

IELTS Speaking Part 3: Traffic

1. Do you prefer traveling by car or by bus?

On the whole I'd say I probably prefer traveling by car. You know, the seats tend to be more comfortable in a car, and a lot of the time it's hard to even get a seat on a bus. So yeah, if I was ever given the choice, I think I'd always choose a car over a bus.

Other phrases:

It's an absolute nightmare traveling on bus when it's crammed full of people.

2. Which vehicles are more likely to be in a traffic jam, cars or buses?

Cars, for sure! You know, there's just a lot more of them! So logically they're far more likely to be in a traffic jam. Obviously there are also bound to be a few buses here and there, but I think it's safe to say that the vast majority of vehicles in a traffic jam will be cars.

Bound to = 肯定会

It's safe to say = 可以(确切地)说

3. If you were in a traffic jam, would you prefer to be in a car or a bus?

I've never really thought about it, but I suppose being in a car would be much more preferable than being on a bus, especially if I didn't have a seat on the bus – which I usually don't! And I can't think of anything much worse than being on a jam-packed bus stuck in the middle of a traffic jam!

Jam-packed = very crowded 拥挤不堪

4. How does having many cars in a city affect the environment?

Well obviously it's gonna affect the air quality, what with all the exhaust coming from the cars. So that, I would say, is definitely the number one thing that's affected, and as well as that, another thing would be noise, especially the hooting, because you can hear it everywhere in cities, probably more than any other noise!

Hooting – 喇叭声

5. Why do so many people want to own their own car?

Um... I guess everyone has their own reason for it, but probably the main one is simply the freedom and mobility that a car brings you. You know, if you have a car, then you don't need to wait for buses and taxis, so you're not reliant on public transport, and it just makes getting around a lot easier.

Freedom and mobility – 自由行动

Getting around = going everywhere

6. What are the traffic conditions like in your hometown?

Dreadful! Absolutely dreadful! I mean, literally every day the traffic's choc-a-block, and it takes ages to get anywhere, unless your really, really lucky! So yeah, it's pretty horrendous!

Dreadful = terrible 糟糕的

choc-a-block = 路全挤满了车

it takes ages = it takes a very long time

horrendous = really awful!

7. Do you feel that traffic congestion is better or worse than it used to be?

Definitely worse – no doubt about it

And I mean, just to give you an example, I remember a few years ago, crossing the bridge over the river to the city centre used to be a fairly painless process, as it was always pretty clear of traffic, whereas nowadays, it gets congested pretty much every day. So yeah, it's definitely got a lot worse, and I'd actually be surprised if there's anywhere in the world where the traffic's got better!

8. What are the causes of traffic jams?

Well I think there's no doubt that the major cause is the increase in the amount of cars on the road. You know, more and more people can afford a car now, and the roads just can't cope with the increased volumes of traffic. So that's definitely the main cause, but there are a few others as well, such as bad weather, um... roadworks and also traffic accidents, which can sometimes cause very long tailbacks, as I'm sure you know.

Roadworks = 道路施工

Tailbacks = traffic jams (车辆长龙)

9. Do you think only the government has the power to manage the problem of traffic jams?

No not really. I think we all have some power to an extent. You know, for example, people can manage what time they start and finish work. If you know there's gonna be a big traffic jam at, let's say, 8 o'clock in the morning, then leave a bit earlier, or a bit later. You know, try and arrange it with you boss or coworkers. So yeah, I think we all have power to some extent, and if you don't want to add to the problem, then don't buy a car in the first place! Just use public transport!

let's say = 比方说

10. What would you suggest as possible solutions to the problem of congested traffic?

Um...that's a really tough one! Let me have a little think quickly! Ok, I suppose the best solution is to improve the overall quality of public transport. For example provide more buses, more bus routes, expand the subway system...all of these things I guess will

help in the long run, cos I mean, even if people have a car, they might choose to take public transport on occasion if it's good.

In the long run = *in the short term*

on occasion – sometimes 有时

Other ideas:

Increase parking fees – 提高停车费

Introduce a congestion charge – 引进拥堵费

11. What is the government doing to help solve traffic jams?

Well, I don't know about other cities, but where I live, here in Hangzhou, they've put a system in place which restricts the amount of cars allowed to travel at certain times of the day according to the last number on their number plate. That kind of sounds a bit complicated, so just to give you an example, on Monday, if the last number on your license plate is 1 or 9, then you're restricted from traveling in the city centre during the morning and evening rush hour. And then on Tuesday, the numbers switch, and so on. It's hard to tell whether it's actually working or not, but at least they're trying!

Restrict = 限制

number plate = ***license plate*** 车牌

12. Do you think building more roads will solve the problem?

No, definitely not, and I think it's been proved around the world that building roads is just a short-term solution, because before long, they start filling up with traffic. So it's almost as if they generate more traffic!

13. Overseas, some governments have increased the sales tax on cars as a way to discourage people from buying cars. Do you think that's a good idea?

Well, looking at it from the government's perspective, it's a great idea! You know, they're gonna get more tax revenue. But for everyone else, I'd say it's not that great an idea! I

mean, if someone has their heart set on buying a car, then I don't think sales tax in itself will stop them from buying one. All it will do is force the person to buy a cheaper car than they would have done. So I guess, obviously it might put off a small minority of people, but for the vast majority, they'll still go on buying cars. At least that's the way I see it!

*You **have your heart set on** doing something = you really want to do it!*

***Go on** doing something = keep (on) doing something (你一心想.....)*

***At least that's the way I see it** = 反正我是这样看的。*