

## Schedule English: What's On Your Schedule?

I don't know if it is true that people today are busier than people were twenty years ago. But I know that I'm busier today than I was twenty years ago! (I was nine, then, and had lots of free time.) Making plans—either for work, or for friends—is getting more difficult for me the older I get. And when the baby comes, everyone tells me, I'll never have free time. I hope that's not true. Still, there's a lot on my schedule now. . .

Unfortunately, English is a bit more complicated than some languages. When I talk about my schedule, I can't use the same word for every item on my schedule. There are differences between meetings, appointments, plans, and dates.

That's what we're going to talk about today.

### Before You Start the Recording

Think about the different things that you plan in your day-to-day life. Maybe a visit to the hair-stylist, a meeting with your best customer, a phone conference with your colleagues around the world, dinner with your girlfriend, and beer and a movie with your best friend. But these are all just my examples. Take a moment to think about—or look at—your schedule for the coming week.

Then start the recording.

### After You Listen to the Recording

What did you learn? Can you use these words to describe your schedule for the coming week? Do you have many dates? What about meetings? Appointments? Do you have plans with your friends on the weekend?

Let us know how your schedule looks!

### Vocabulary

**Appointment:** An *appointment* is a scheduled visit to someone. But this is normally a visit to someone like a doctor, or a hairdresser, or another professional. An appointment *usually* isn't for your work. It's normally with a professional, but for some element of your private life. You can have appointments with your psychiatrist and appointments at the dentist's. But you don't have an appointment with your boss or your best friend. We have other words for that.

**Meeting:** A *meeting* is a face-to-face conversation with one or more people, usually for work.

When you talk to your boss, it's a meeting. When you talk to your colleagues, it's a meeting. And when you talk to your customers, it's also a meeting. But you can have meetings for other

organizations that you belong to. The best example of this that I can think of are club meetings.

**Date:** I've been married for over two years, but I still try to schedule romantic time with my wife.

Or, in other words, I still have *dates* with my wife. A 'date' is a word that has a connotation of being a 'romantic meeting.' You probably don't want to say that you have a 'date with your boss.'

**Plans:** I have a lot of things planned that aren't work, and they aren't romantic. Maybe going to the bar and having a beer with my friend Rob before we see a good action movie. Or going to the coffee shop with my brother and sister to sit and talk. These aren't dates—there's no romance between my brother and me—these are simply 'plans.' As in “I have plans with my brother on Saturday.”