

When bad means good

1. Complete the gaps with the correct prepositions. You should use the same preposition in each pair of expressions.

- a) a sports activity you're bad **at**
a household chore you're good **at** doing
- b) a habit that is bad **for** our health
a reason why competition is good **for** business
- c) a decision you've made recently that you feel good **about**
a thing you feel bad **about** not doing in the past
- d) a person you know who is good **with** children
a person who is bad **with** money
- e) a person who's always been good **to** you
a reason why some people are bad **to** others

2. Choose one situation from each pair in ex. 1 and talk about it.

3. Read the sentences and answer the questions below.

[Before this activity, you could elicit from your students what part of speech the words *good* and *bad* could be. Some of them might already know some other than just adjectives.]

- a) She's been waiting for a good half hour to finally be seated in her favourite restaurant.
- b) They're very negative and only see the bad in everything.
- c) Even small donations can do a lot of good.
- d) Man! Your new motorcycle is so bad!
- e) They've just lost their jobs, so they need money real bad¹.

- 1) In which sentence does *bad* mean *good*? **d**
- 2) In which sentence is *bad* used as an adverb? **e**
- 3) In which sentences are *good* and *bad* used as nouns? **b, c**
- 4) In which sentence does *bad* mean *very much*? **e**
- 5) In which sentence does *good* mean *more than*? **a**

¹ Note that this is AmE and informal use of *bad* as an adverb

4. Discuss the questions.

- Would you ever wait a good half hour or more to be seated in a restaurant?
Why (not)?
- Do you think that our brains are wired to only see the bad in everything?
Why (not)?
- What does more good: donating money or volunteering?
- What is one thing you need real bad right now?

5. Read the dialogues and complete them with *good* or *bad*. Then, try to explain the meaning of the underlined phrases.

EXAMPLE: A: Would you like something else to drink?

B: No, I'm good. Thanks.

- a) A: Oh great, we won't see the concert. It's sold out!
B: My bad, I thought tickets would be available just before the concert.
- b) A: How's your new business?
B: So far so good, but we have to wait a bit longer to see how it goes in the long run.
- c) A: I didn't get the job.
B: Oh, that's too bad. Do you have any other interviews?
- d) A: Have you seen Kate dancing? Not bad, eh?
B: Yeah, she's great! She'll definitely win the competition!
- e) A: Honey, I bought a Ferrari!
B: You did what? Ha, ha, that's a good one! I almost believed you!
- f) A: I can't come. I'm ill!
B: Oh, bad luck. I'm sure you can come next time!
- g) A: Do you have all your stuff?
B: Almost. Just give me a couple of minutes and I'll be good to go.
- h) A: Guess what, mum? I got promoted!
B: Oh, sweetie, good for you!
- i) A: I failed the test.
B: Too bad. You should have studied more.

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my bad – (AmE) used to admit that something is your fault

so far so good – successful up to this point

(that's) too bad – there are two meanings: you can use it either to say that you feel sympathy about a problem, or that you do not care. It depends on what is being said and the way you say it.

not bad – quite good and better than you expected

that's a good one – used to tell someone that you do not believe something they have said, or think it is a joke or a trick

bad luck – used to express sympathy with someone when something bad has happened to them

be good to go – be ready to do something

good for you – used to show approval for someone's success or good luck

6. Use the underlined phrases in the dialogues in ex. 5 to write two more dialogues.

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7. Choose a card and think what you would say when faced with the situation. Use the expressions with *good* and *bad* from this lesson.



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<p>You took a wrong turn and now you and your friend are lost.</p>	<p>Your friend is asking you how your house renovation is going.</p>	<p>Your friend is saying they're not coming to your party.</p>
<p>Your friend is asking you how you like the dish they cooked for you.</p>	<p>Your friend has just told you they won a million dollars on the lottery.</p>	<p>You see the most amazing car in the world.</p>
<p>Your friend is asking you whether you are ready to set off.</p>	<p>Your friend is telling you that they're going back to work after a long break.</p>	<p>You want to tell your partner that you love them very much.</p>
<p>You are meeting a friend in ten minutes and they ask you if you want a doughnut from a café.</p>	<p>Your teenage kid wants to go to a party this weekend, but they're grounded, so they can't go. Honestly, you don't care.</p>	<p>Your friend is telling you that their car broke down and they missed the interview.</p>
<p>You want to buy a car, but the price is so low for such a car that your friend is very suspicious and says you shouldn't trust the seller.</p>	<p>Your friend has just told you they have broken up with their partner who cheated on them, and they're going to start a new life.</p>	<p>You're meeting your friends for lunch. When they finally arrive, they're an hour late. You're quite frustrated.</p>