



602 Bargain Shopping

Joel and Tom discuss shopping for goods in Thailand and when to bargain.

Joel: Hey, Tom, when you were in Thailand, did you, were you good at bargaining? You know how you have to **haggle** to get the price lower.

Tom: Once I got started it was OK, but, oh, getting started was so difficult.

Joel: What do you mean?

Tom: I just knew that when I walked up to **a market stall**, that I'd pick up something, and if it was something that I wanted, to get it, I'd have to start fighting. I'd have to get through his argument it felt like, and I was really uncomfortable about doing that.

Joel: That's the problem with me, too. I was always too nice. It's like, you know, I'd give them one price and then, they would never go for the price that I ask for so I, if the price was a 100, and I said, "OK, 50", then they would say, "Well, OK, 95", and I usually wouldn't take it much further than that.

Tom: Oh, no, that's completely, I'm completely different. If I started it was because it was something that I really wanted, and I'd already have an idea of the price, so once I started that **whole deal**, oh it could take quite a long time. I'd, we'd chat, you know, it's a very friendly way of doing it in Thailand. We'd talk about the price. I'd do a lot of smiling. I'd pick up some other things that were similar and I'd really go for it and take a long time.

Joel: I heard that the **trick to it** is you really need to tell them a whole story, like you can't just say, "Oh, I want the price lower", you have to say like, "Oh, well, you know, I don't have any money and I really need to get this for my family and this is the last time I'm going to be here, you know, I've run out of money, can you give me a deal on it. You can't just tell them you want a lower price. You have to give them a good reason and you have to have a dramatic story to go along with it.

Tom: I've done that in the past. I've emptied out my wallet, and I've said, this is for my lunch. This is for the taxi. This is all I've got left for you. Right, and then you take a bus home. A bus is a lot cheaper than a taxi.

Joel: I've also heard, like you can get, usually if, as I've said



Tom Joel

Vocabulary Quiz

haggled • market stall • deal
trick to it

1. It was my first week of work, so I had to learn about company policies and that whole .
2. He wanted \$30 for this sweater, but I him down to about \$15.
3. The over there is where I always buy my fruit.
4. This door won't open. Is there a or something?

Quiz

1) How does Tom feel about bargaining?

- a) Indifferent
- b) Uncomfortable
- c) Motivated

2) What do they recommend?

- a) Telling a story
- b) Raising your voice
- c) Looking really sad

3) How much of a discount can you get?

- a) 30 percent
- b) 50 percent
- c) 70 percent

4) What was Tom buying for his mother?

- a) Trousers
- b) Ties
- c) Both

5) What does Joel want shoes for?

- a) To wear to work
- b) To sell in America
- c) To wear at Christmas

Audio Notes

haggle

You have to haggle to get the price lower.

When you 'haggle' with someone who is selling something, you are negotiating a price for something. Notice the following:

1. In some places, haggling is considered offensive.
2. The price was so cheap to start with that I didn't even want to haggle.

a market stall

When I walk up to a market stall, I just look for what I want and buy it.

A 'market stall' is usually a table with something to protect it from the sun. It is an informal shop where people sell fruit, vegetables, food, clothes, etc. on the street. These stalls are

before, if the price is, the quoted price is 100, then you should shoot for, not a third of that but, even like, half of that. You can get it for 50, not 75.

Tom: Yeah, I think the first price is always, you can always get a big reduction on that, but I remember the last time I went shopping in Thailand I was buying stuff for my mum and I'd left it really late and it was pouring down with rain and my mom wanted something, it was very specific, some silk trousers and she wanted 10 pairs to give them away to her friends, and I trolled around this big bazaar with hundred of shops looking for this very specific product and eventually I found it and the shopkeeper only had half a dozen; I wanted more, and she said her price and I just gave her the money. I wanted to get home as quickly as possible, so I got half a dozen ties **on top of** the trousers because I hadn't bargained. She gave me something extra just for not trying.

Joel: Are you going to Thailand over this break?

Tom: I'm going at Christmas, yeah.

Joel: I'm wondering if, I got really big feet, and I'm having a hard time getting shoes here. Do you know, I know you have big feet too, I'm wondering, is it possible to get big shoes?

Tom: Yeah, they definitely have them. They make them there and they're all these outlets.

Joel: And, they're cheap too, right?

Tom: That's right.

Joel: I'm wondering if you can pick me up some when you're out there, like any kind of business shoes.

Tom: You want business shoes?

Joel: Yeah.

Tom: OK.

Joel: Just black business shoes, any kind you find is fine.

Tom: Lace-ups?

Joel: Yeah, lace-ups are fine. And like a size 12, American.

Tom: You want one pair, or two pairs?

Joel: Yeah, maybe two pairs, that's even better.

Tom: Sure, **I'll see what I can find.**

usually put up in the morning and taken down at the end of the day. Markets are often open only one or two days a week.

Notice the following:

1. I actually sell these hats from a market stall, and each day I'm at a different market.
2. My favorite place to get soup is a little market stall that is only open on Saturdays.

whole deal

Once you start that whole deal, it could take quite a long time.

The 'whole deal' refers to a long process from start to finish. In this case haggling to eventually buy something. Notice the following:

1. I don't understand the whole deal about transferring from one plane to another. Can you explain it again?
2. Sorry I'm a little late. I had to go through the whole deal of explaining my plans to my parents.

trick to it

I just learned a trick to it that really works.

The 'trick to something' is what makes it work in an easier or faster way. Notice the following:

1. My stereo doesn't work unless you know the trick to turning it on.
2. This computer game is a lot easier once you learn the trick to it.

