

How to build furniture

Posted by Peter on 25 October 2006

In this podcast, we meet the expression "**the trouble is that...**" (which means "the problem is that...."). We also discover several different ways of getting things wrong - [upside down](#), [back to front](#) and [inside out](#). Kevin and Joanne sat on their sofa and looked around their flat. It was a mess. There were books and clothes and bits of hi-fi equipment all over the floor.

"**The trouble is,**" said Joanne, "that you never put things away."

"No, **the trouble is** that we have nowhere to put things," said Kevin. And Kevin was right. They needed more cupboards or shelves to put things on.

So they went to [IKEA](#). IKEA is a huge home-furnishing store. You can find IKEA stores in many big cities in Britain, and most European countries and nowadays in lots of places outside Europe. Nearly all English people say "eye-key-a". But I know that in Sweden people say "ee-kay-a", and since IKEA is a Swedish company, that is the way I pronounce their name. Actually, IKEA is very Swedish. All their ranges of furniture have Swedish names, and some of these sound funny (or even rude) in English. And the cafe at IKEA serves Swedish dishes like herring and Swedish meat-balls. IKEA furniture is "flat-pack" furniture. That means that you buy it in a pack containing all the parts you need, and when you get it home you assemble it yourself. And sometimes you find that not all the pieces are there and you have to go back to the store to get the missing bits. But to return to our story. Kevin and Joanne walked around the huge store for about an hour, and found what they needed - [a cupboard and some bookshelves](#). The fun started when they got it all home and started to assemble it. Kevin set to work. Joanne wisely went to sit in the kitchen. About two hours later, Kevin said, "It's finished." "Mmm," said Joanne, looking at the cupboard and the bookshelf. "**The trouble is** that this bit is **back to front**. And you have put the doors on **upside down**."

So Kevin had to dismantle the furniture and start again. He cut his finger, and hit his thumb with a hammer. Shortly before midnight, it was finished. Joanne brought him a cup of tea and admired his work. "It is perfect now," said Kevin. "Nothing **back to front**. Nothing **upside down**." "No," said Joanne, "but Kevin - your jumper - look, it's **inside out!**"

This is the text of the podcast at <http://www.listen-to-english.com/index.php?id=191>,