

## Shmanners 176: Flea Markets

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**Travis:** Uh, that'll be, uh... five podcasts.

**Teresa:** Would you take two?

**Travis:** Ooh, how about three and a half?

**Teresa:** It's Shmanners!

[theme music plays]

**Travis:** Hello, internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

**Teresa:** And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

**Travis:** And you're listening to Shmanners!

**Teresa:** It's extraordinary etiquette...

**Travis:** ... for ordinary occasions. Hello, my dove.

**Teresa:** Hellooo dear!

**Travis:** How are you?

**Teresa:** I'm doin' alright.

**Travis:** Okay. 'Cause you're pregnant. I can talk about it now, 'cause we publically—

**Teresa:** Ahh, you can talk about it now!

**Travis:** We publically announced it.

**Teresa:** And y'know what happens when you're pregnant?

**Travis:** You feel like crap?

**Teresa:** Yeah. [laughs]

**Travis:** Yeahhh. Plus, you got a cold, and then I got a cold...

**Teresa:** Yeahhh...

**Travis:** Woo boy.

**Teresa:** We're trying hard to keep Bebe from gettin' that cold.

**Travis:** Yeah. We just keep her locked away in her room. [laughs]

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** We put her in a plexiglass cube.

**Teresa:** Nooo.

**Travis:** Nooo. She's fine. She's got a solid immune system, that kid.

**Teresa:** Yeah, she's pretty good.

**Travis:** She's only gotten sick like five times in three years. Not bad.

**Teresa:** Well, that we've really known about.

**Travis:** Yeah, we don't pay a lot of attention to her. You're right. Is that what you meant?

**Teresa:** That's not—nooo!

**Travis:** Okay, let me ask you a question. Let's get on to—hey. Let's get on topic.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** This feels like a good, summery topic, and maybe even a little, like, fall, autumn-y topic.

**Teresa:** Yes. Indeed.

**Travis:** Autumnal. Have you ever been to like, a flea market, flea market? Like, honest to goodness?

**Teresa:** Yeah. No, remember? We went to the Rose Bowl flea market.

**Travis:** Yeahhh, yeah yeah yeah!

**Teresa:** When we lived in LA. That's an honest to goodness flea market.

**Travis:** That's so funny. I wasn't even thinking about that. Growing up in West Virginia, we had a lot. So I think any state that touches another state calls themselves the tri-state or whatever, touches another two states, I should say. But we lived in very close proximity to like, a fairly big town in Kentucky, and an okay sized town in Ohio. It was, uh, Huntington, Ironton, Ohio, and Ashton, Kentucky. And so, like, you could jump across the river. It was like a ten minute drive, and you were in these other cities. So like, there were flea markets all over the place in that area.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** And so like, I can remember once, very distinctly, needing cowboy boots for something. I think maybe it was like, for like a play I was in or something, when I was like a teenager.

**Teresa:** And then you never took them off.

**Travis:** And I never took them off. But needing cowboy boots, and my mom and I like, going to flea markets first before like, going to stores or whatever to find cowboy boots. I've spent some time—I enjoy flea markets. Good place to find pocket knives, which is a thing I like.

**Teresa:** Oh, really? Yes. Hm.

**Travis:** So anyways—

**Teresa:** I'm trying to remember, did we buy anything at the Rose Bowl?

**Travis:** I'm sure we did. Yeah. For sure. I don't remember. I don't think we bought anything major. Oh, I think I—

**Teresa:** I recall I was looking for a wide-brimmed hat, and I didn't find the kind I wanted.

**Travis:** I think I bought a vintage jacket, maybe?

**Teresa:** Yeah. Mm-hmm. Military-style jacket.

**Travis:** Yes, I believe so. Um, so we're talking about... hamburgers! No, we're talking about flea markets.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** So, I am interested, for the first time ever, in the history. So please tell me a little bit about the history of flea markets.

**Teresa:** Okay. Well, so—

**Travis:** Can I guess how far they go back? 'Cause I'm gonna bet you're gonna reference like, a bazaar, right? A B-A-Z-A-A-R?

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** I mean, marketplaces have been like, an idea forever.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** But I want to... y'know, the term, 'flea market,' was not attached to anything. It wasn't a term until... do you want me to tell you the year?

**Travis:** Uh, I'm gonna guess! 1946!

**Teresa:** Nooo. Way back. Further back.

**Travis:** 1815!

**Teresa:** Closer, but middle of that.

**Travis:** Okay, just tell me.

**Teresa:** [laughs] 1860s.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** In Paris.

**Travis:** That's way earlier than I thought it would be.

**Teresa:** Really?

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Hmm. Um—

**Travis:** In Paris?

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** They used the term 'flea market' in Paris?

**Teresa:** Well, it wasn't—

**Travis:** It was probably like, 'flea mar-kay.'

**Teresa:** [long pause] It wasn't called 'flea market.'

**Travis:** [laughs] Okay. You didn't need to re—you just looked blank. You just had a blank look on your—okay. It wasn't called flea market.

**Teresa:** Because they speak French.

**Travis:** Well, yes, but like... the idea, the concept, of flea market?

**Teresa:** Yes. So, um, the term was first used in an 1860s article referring to the Marché Aux Puces.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Uh, which literally translates to 'a market where one acquires fleas.'

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** That's how it started.

**Travis:** So it's fairly literal in the naming, right?

**Teresa:** I mean, sure, but like, 1860s... parasites were everywhere.

**Travis:** So it probably *was* literal at that point.

**Teresa:** Probably. Especially since it was an open, outdoor market with old furniture that people were trying to offload, so it probably did have fleas in it.

**Travis:** Old furniture, old clothes, old stuff.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** It probably wasn't like... it probably wasn't a like, side-eye, like, "Ugh, yeah, if you want to get fleas." It was probably like, "Okay, but yeah, you will get fleas." [laughs] "But like, hey. Heads up. That's a great couch. It probably has fleas."

**Teresa:** I mean, everybody probably had fleas.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, and not necessarily old is what I mean. But not like... at this point, it wasn't like, super new, handmade goods. They were, y'know, manufactured goods that people were selling. Or...

**Travis:** Or!

**Teresa:** [laughs] In the time of Napoleon III, he had the imperial architect make plans to remap all of the city of Paris. So in demolishing alleys and slums, and creating these great big paved boulevards, it caused so many of these like, merchants who would set up on the street, instead of within buildings, to y'know, flee – F-L-E-E – from their original shops.

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** So what would happen was, these displaced vendors would set up outside of the front gate of a former fort in northern Paris, and they started selling their wares at the flee, F-L-E-E market.

**Travis:** Mm-hmmmm.

**Teresa:** Maaaybe...

**Travis:** Maaaybe... hey, that makes as much sense to me as anything else.

**Teresa:** The consensus is, probably Paris, 1860s. Whether it has to do with parasites, or um, or gentrification.

**Travis:** Running away. Yeah.

**Teresa:** I don't know.

**Travis:** Man, that seems like a lot of work. When you said remapping, my first thought was, "Like demolishing..." And I was like, "No, that's too much." And then I thought, probably just like, redrawing the map.

**Teresa:** Yeah. No.

**Travis:** It's like, no no no. Just the idea of being like, "This city... I don't care for how it's laid out. Destroy Paris and rebuild!" Oh boysie.

**Teresa:** Y'know, when you're an emperor, you kind of...

**Travis:** I guess that's true. Someday, I'll find out what that's like.

**Teresa:** Oh, will you?

**Travis:** If my plan goes according to plan.

**Teresa:** Okay. So nowadays, flea markets are typically facilities that'll rent space to people, and they offer second hand, or discount items. Right?

**Travis:** Mm-hmm. I've seen them in like... I've seen them called many different things, right? There's a place here in Cincinnati. It's called, I think, the Great Antique Mall. And it's like, very high end stuff. But it is, "Here is a stall." And it's in a nice, fully enclosed, y'know, temperature controlled building, but it is, "Here's a stall that different people rent the stall to sell



their antiques in that stall.” And you have to pay to rent—which is exactly what I think of when I think of a flea market.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** Then, I have also been to places that look like converted barns with stalls, where they just like, throw open big doors, and that’s how they get ventilation and air. And y’know, it’s a little dingy, and...

**Teresa:** Well, we went through one in Nashville. No, where were we?

**Travis:** Mm...

**Teresa:** Oh, it was Charleston.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Remember where it was? Basically like, there were kind of like, gazebos in the middle of the street.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** And they had... the walls were just packed with people selling things. A lot of those were handmade goods, though.

**Travis:** Yes. I mean, we—listen, folks. We love this kind of thing. We went to a giant one... and now I’m trying to remember where it was. I think in Dublin? Uh, we went to one, or maybe it was London. We went to like a huge one that had like, food and a bunch of vintage-y clothing.

**Teresa:** Oh, yeah. Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** And any time we’re in New York and we see any kind of like, fair... but that’s the thing, right? I think it has become, like, does it mean a place where people set up stalls under tents, and it’s like, kind of a pop up fair almost? Or y’know, a street fair, street market, flea market? I feel like they’ve become a little bit interchangeable terminology.

**Teresa:** They have. There are a few distinctions. So in order to be like, a bona fide antique market, most of the things that they're going to be selling are over 100 years old. As opposed to a swap meet, maybe, where a lot of the goods are used, and they are less than 100 years old.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** And then, there's vintage markets, which are usually catered towards clothing and housewares. And then, there are kind of like... there are themed markets in the way of, I think what you're thinking of as street fairs, like um... you guys have, in West Virginia, the Pumpkin Festival.

**Travis:** Yeah, we have the Pumpkin—I'm talking more about like, when you're walking around, and someone's set up, and they're selling like, here's a thing of scarves. And this table has a bunch of handmade soap. But they've just like, set up tents in like, a basketball court, or y'know, they've closed off the ends of the street, and set up like, food and tents and that kind of thing.

**Teresa:** Well, I don't know if that would count as a flea market. I feel like a flea market needs to have an established location, whether it's indoor or outdoor. It can't just be a street.

**Travis:** Gotcha.

**Teresa:** Alright. So, one of the other things that distinguishes flea markets from other sort of like, merchant tents is, a lot of flea markets have a dedicated staff. So the vendors don't have to staff their booths. Everything is labeled appropriately. And usually, at those places, there's not a lot of haggling. If you're not there... if the vendor isn't there, you have to take the price tag for price value, because the employees of the flea market, um, rental space, are not gonna care. They don't—they don't care about getting you a good deal or whatever. They are just there to do their job.

Um, but, if you find that you are there with a vendor, um, haggling is part of the deal.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** And I would love to talk about that a little bit.

**Travis:** Well, um, I'm glad, because we got a lot of questions about it. It was kind of like the number one question we got. And so, let's talk about it. But first... how about a thank you note for our sponsors?

**Teresa:** Let's go.

[theme music plays]

**Teresa:** Shmanners is brought to you in part this week by Native deodorant. Native has fewer, simpler ingredients that are thoughtfully sourced around the world, and made in the USA. They've got great scents, something for everybody. My favorites at the moment, I really like the coconut and vanilla. And then they had, uh, some floral scents for summer I really liked.

**Travis:** Ooh!

**Teresa:** There's like a lavender... mm, it's nice.

**Travis:** See, I like the cucumber and mint.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** You're not a fan of cucumber in general.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** That's fine. I like it.

**Teresa:** Um, uh, you can save... up to two dollars per stick, and have Native conveniently delivered to your door every one, two, three, or even

four months. Um, I love that fragrance. I also—here's the thing. I... don't mind being sweaty.

**Travis:** Yeah. It's a deodorant, not an antiperspirant.

**Teresa:** Exactly. It's a deodorant, not an antiperspirant. I smell great. But I feel like my body's still doing what my body does.

**Travis:** Mm, that's fair.

**Teresa:** I really like that.

**Travis:** So what's the deal? What can we do? What can our listeners dooo?

**Teresa:** The deal. The listener deal is... for 20% off of your first purchase, you can visit [NativeDeodorant.com](http://NativeDeodorant.com) and use the promo code 'Shmanners' during check out. Simple as that.

**Travis:** We're also sponsored in part this week by Roomkey. Let me tell you, folks – in the month, uh, basically from July 12<sup>th</sup> to August 12<sup>th</sup>, I slept in my own bed, uh, about four nights. The rest of the time, I was in hotels. I was traveling. I did numerous conventions, and live shows, and everything. And here's the thing – I know. Trust me, from personal experience, that getting hotel rooms, searching for hotel rooms, can be so stressful.

The biggest worry for me is, what if there's a better option somewhere else? What if there's a better deal somewhere else?

**Teresa:** What if there's a better room for less?

**Travis:** Yes. This is what I'm saying. Roomkey is a hotel search site dedicated to transparency in travel. No misleading information, no tricks hiding in the fine print. Roomkey has tools that make hotel search easy and gimmick free. And when you're ready to book, Roomkey takes you to the hotel's website to book direct, which is the best way to secure your room, rate, and loyalty points without worry of lost reservations.

Hotel search without the gimmicks. Hotel booking without the runaround. That's how Roomkey makes travel work for you. So, head to [Roomkey.com/Shmanners](https://Roomkey.com/Shmanners) to book your next trip. That's [Roomkey.com/Shmanners](https://Roomkey.com/Shmanners).

[music plays]

**Raleigh:** I'm Raleigh Smirl.

**Sydnee:** I'm Sydnee McElroy.

**Taylor:** And I'm Taylor Smirl.

**Sydnee:** And together, we host a podcast called Still Buffering, where we answer questions like...

**Raleigh:** Why should I not fall asleep first at a slumber party?

**Taylor:** How do I be fleek?

**Sydnee:** Is it okay to break up with someone using emojis?

**Taylor:** And sometimes we talk about butts.

**Raleigh:** Nooo we don't. Nope.

**Taylor:** [laughs]

**Sydnee:** Find out the answers to these important questions, and many more, on Still Buffering, a sisters' guide to teens through the ages.

**Raleigh:** I am a teenager...

**Sydnee:** And I... was... too.

**Taylor:** [simultaneously] And I... was... too. Butts. Butts, butts, butts butts.

**Raleigh:** Nooo. [laughs]

[music plays]

**Laurie:** Hi, I am Laurie Kilmartin.

**Jackie:** And I'm Jackie Kashian.

**Laurie:** Together, we host a podcast called...

**Jackie:** The Jackie and Laurie Show.

**Laurie:** We're both standup comics. We recently met each other, because women weren't allowed to work together on the road or in gigs for a long, long time. And so, our friendship has been unfolding on this podcast for a couple of years. Jackie constantly works the road, I write for Conan, and then I work the road in between.

**Jackie:** We do a lot of standup comedy, and so, we celebrate standup, and we also bitch about it.

**Laurie:** Yes. We keep it to an hour. We don't have any guests. We somehow find enough to talk about every single week. So find us – you can subscribe to The Jackie and Laurie Show at [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org), or wherever you get your podcasts.

**Jackie:** `Kay, bye.

**Travis:** Okay, so we got some great questions. First one, right out the gate, and I would say this is like, the number one question we got asked. This is from Wolfthorn. "What is the etiquette of haggling, or attempting to get a certain item cheaper?"

**Teresa:** Perfect. So, here we go. Number one thing is to be polite. Ask them about the object you're interested in, make some small talk, say hello. All of that stuff. I mean, try and... I don't want to say warm the person up, but be a nice person.

**Travis:** Yes. Listen. Flies. Honey. Let's go. That's how it works. Can I give— can I give another piece of advice, too?

**Teresa:** Sure!

**Travis:** Um, don't... don't default to haggling. Right? 'Cause sometimes, someone tells me the price of something, and it's the price I had in my head, and I'm like, "Okay, yeah, that makes sense." Right?

**Teresa:** Okay, yeah.

**Travis:** So that way, if there's another item that I want, and they say, "And that one's like, 20 bucks." And I was thinking more like 12, then like, I'm not just like, "Okay, let's haggle!" For the sake of haggling. And then I can say like, "Oh, mmm..." and like, I've established that I will pay what I think is fair.

**Teresa:** Another way that you can tell if a vendor is prepared to haggle or lower their price is if the price is marked on the item. If there's no price marked, like... I have been to a vintage market where someone just brings a suitcase full of scarves. Usually, I can find three or four that I like, and I say... "Would you take \$5 for these? All these scarves? Perfect." And bundling is a really great way to go.

**Travis:** Right, yes. "Three for each."

"Ooh, how about eight for four?" Right? I would also say, another good one, just to know if they're ready to haggle... listen to the terminology they use. 'Cause if they say, "That is five dollars," versus, "What would you say to five dollars?" Or, "How about five dollars?" Or, "Mmm... six dollars?" Like, y'know what I mean?

But if they say, "That costs five dollars," it's a pretty good indication they're probably not looking to haggle.

**Teresa:** Here's some more, like, actual script ideas for you to say. Uh, "Can you take five dollars for this?" Right? Or, "Do you have any room on the price?" Just to see. Right?

**Travis:** Oh, that's good.

**Teresa:** Or, um, "Is there anything you can do for me on this?" Um, I saw different sites of etiquette saying, yes, say, "What's the best you can do?" Others saying, don't say that. I would stay away from it. I really like—

**Travis:** Yeah, 'cause that makes it—that's too open-ended to me, right? I always feel like saying, "Oh, you could do better," or, "What's the best?" is kind of insulting. Of saying like, "You're not giving me the best deal!"

I think saying, once again, like, we always say "I" statements or something. "What would you say to six dollars?"

**Teresa:** Or, "I would give you..."

**Travis:** "I could do eight?"

**Teresa:** Yeah, something like that.

**Travis:** Um, and along those same lines... so if they say ten dollars, like, another thing is, counter with a price that is in the same—like, if they say ten dollars, don't say, "Alright, \$1.50." Like, try like, eight? Right? Or seven? And if they say ten, and you say eight, and they say, "The price is ten," don't keep trying to haggle.

**Teresa:** Right. If you really want it, you need to figure out what it's worth to ya. Because the counter-offer may come, and a counter-offer may not come.

**Travis:** Yep.



**Teresa:** And then, so, another thing that you can do for yourself. Right? To make things easier on yourself while you're haggling is, have cash in multiple bills.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** That way, you can offer eight dollars instead of ten. So you're not handing the person a ten, and they're giving you back two dollars, because the price was ten... y'know what I mean? Right?

**Travis:** Yes. And... okay, so...

**Teresa:** Oh, is this going into other questions? Perfect.

**Travis:** Yes. So Jill asked, "How do I bargain when I hate confrontation?" And here are two sneaky Travis McElroy tricks, alright? If they have indicated, right? Like, if they said like, "How about ten dollars?" Right? You can then say, "Oh, okay." And just put the item back and say, "Nevermind." Right? And then see if they say, like, "Well, what about eight?" Right? They might suggest a different price without you having to say anything.

The other option is, pull out eight dollars, and say, "All I have is eight."  
[laughs] Right?

**Teresa:** I would—

**Travis:** Wait, listen!

**Teresa:** Hmmmm...

**Travis:** I know it's sneaky! I know! It's called a lie. And I think it would work.

**Teresa:** It is called a lie. I... I don't doubt that it has, in time, worked. I wouldn't advocate that if you're not into confrontation, though, 'cause you might be called out on it. But, I do think that it makes a better transaction if

you do carry smaller bills, so that when the person asks for ten, and you say eight, and then you give them a ten dollar bill, they're not like, mad at you.

**Travis:** Yeah, they're not like, "Well, now I have to make change. You haggled, and I had to make change."

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** I also think, y'know, you could also like... it's not confrontation. This is the thing, right? If you... if you are observing body language, if you talk to them... not even body language. Word choice. This isn't about social cues. Anyone who wants to make a deal and sell a thing is going to give you pretty clear indications that they're willing to make a deal.

Another good advice—and this just, in general, any time someone sets up a booth... if you are a deal hunter, and not something... I'm trying to think of the best way to phrase this. Because if you're looking for the cream of the crop selection, get there early. Right?

**Teresa:** But if you're looking for really great prices, go at the end.

**Travis:** Right, when maybe they don't want to haul everything home, and so they might be willing to come down a little bit.

**Teresa:** Or bundle things together for you.

**Travis:** Right.

**Teresa:** All that kind of stuff.

**Travis:** But never assume that. Because like, listen – those vendors are out there working hard. Especially the handmade... this is the other thing. When you're talking about like, handmade crafts, these people probably know exactly how much they can sell that for, and make money off of it. Because they had to buy the materials, and the labor to make it. That's one area where I really wouldn't advise haggling, is if somebody is selling something they made by hand.

**Teresa:** Right. I agree. But in the case of like, furniture or second hand goods, or things like that, you can...

**Travis:** Right. That's where you probably have a lot more, uh, kind of leeway to make a deal. Um, let's see... This is from Caroline. "Do I need to say anything to, or otherwise acknowledge, the folks manning a booth if I'm just browsing and not planning to buy?"

**Teresa:** Um, I make it a habit whenever I go into a store or a booth, just to say hello to the vendor. And then, even if I don't buy anything, say thank you as I leave.

**Travis:** This is absolutely true, and it's in fact a habit that she's imparted to me. Especially now when I take like, Bebe into stores, and people are very attentive, or Bebe might run around, y'know, bein' a kid. And it's like, "Hey, thank you for, y'know, talking to me," Or, "Thank you for your time," or whatever. Now I do it too.

**Teresa:** I don't even say—I just say thank you.

**Travis:** I mean, I don't say it. I just say thank you.

**Teresa:** As I'm walking out the door. And I think that's plenty.

**Travis:** Um, I also – because this happens to me – whether it's like, at a convention, or in any shop, really. If there's somebody working, I'm always—I like to just look on my own, right? I don't like having someone "help me," quote unquote, unless I need help. And so, I think you could acknowledge them, and then, like, "Hi!" And then get to looking.

**Teresa:** Absolutely.

**Travis:** And if they say, like, "Do you need any help?" You can say like, "I'm just browsing." Right?

**Teresa:** Certainly.

**Travis:** I don't think you have to like, keep up a string of talking with them if you don't want to. Um, let's see... uh, the Mayor of Nothing asks, "How early should I get to the flea market to get those good deals?" Like we were talking about, I think it's the difference between... y'know, it's that sliding scale, right? You might not have the same selection. You might find an amazing bargain. Like, whenever we watch—

**Teresa:** Especially one of a kind things.

**Travis:** Right.

**Teresa:** If you're really looking for something specific, I do think that it's important to get there early.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** But if you're just hunting for a good deal on maybe something to put on your wall, then later is probably better for that.

**Travis:** This is one of my favorite things about watching Antiques Roadshow. Trust me, I'll come back to this question. Is like, whenever people find out that the thing they bought for like, 20 bucks is worth a lot of money, there are two different reactions. Reaction one is like, someone who, it's been in their family forever, their dad bought it, and they've just found out it's worth like, 20 thousand dollars, and they lose. Their. I almost cursed. [laughs] They go bonkers. Right?

But, the other person I really like is someone who's very clearly like, an antiques dealer who bought the thing thinking it was worth a lot of money, just found out it was worth a lot of money, and they just go, "Oh, okay." [laughs] So what I'm saying is, if you are that—if you are looking for a like, diamond in the rough, like, "Oh my gosh, this person has no idea how much this thing is worth and they're selling it for 20 bucks..." Early.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** You want to get there early.

**Teresa:** Not early enough so that you beat the vendors. [laughs]

**Travis:** Yes. "Where have you guys been?"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Um, let's see. Uh, Izzy asks, "Do I have to keep my hands to myself at a flea market, or am I allowed to touch things?"

**Teresa:** Ooh. Uh, y'know, I...

**Travis:** That's a tough one.

**Teresa:** [sighs] If you think that it's fragile, I would go by the one finger rule.

**Travis:** Yeah. And listen – if you break it, you bought it. That's what's up.

**Teresa:** Yeah, that's the thing.

**Travis:** And for me, if it's something that you want to pick up, or better yet, need to pick up before you buy, like, it's something you want to check out, always say, "May I? Would it be okay?" And most likely, they'll say like, "Oh yeah, go for it."

**Teresa:** Yeah, like, if I'm looking at glassware, I want to inspect it for chips and cracks, and see if it has dishwasher safe on the bottom. [laughs]

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Things like that.

**Travis:** See if it's cursed.

**Teresa:** See if it's cursed. So, then, it needs... I need to pick it up.

**Travis:** Yes. But I think asking, or saying, y'know, "Is it alright if I pick it up?" is a good way to go. But for me, man... when I was a kid, my mom would have me like, hold my hands behind my back, 'cause I'd fidget, and I was a klutz, so I'd keep my hands behind my back. And still, to this day, I am 35 years old, if I walk into a place that is at all closed quarters, instantly, those hands go behind, and I'm just like—

**Teresa:** You really do. You try and make yourself smaller.

**Travis:** I'm just trying not to like, Shrek around and knock everything over.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Um, this is from Tyler. Uh, "What is the etiquette for asking someone to hold an item I want to circle back and buy later?"

**Teresa:** Okay, so here's the difference. You really have to know and have a relationship with the vendor if you're not gonna buy it and have them hold it. Because holding an item that you might want to come back for later is a favor. Right?

**Travis:** Right. 'Cause that's the thing is, basically what you're saying is, "I might come back and give you money for this, so if someone wants to give you money for it outright, tell them no." Which is the kind of counter purpose to why they are there.

**Teresa:** If you buy an item that's too large to carry around with you, or it's just like a big place or whatever, you buy it, and they hold it for you, that's a service.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** That you'll come back for it at the end of the day with your hand cart, or y'know, you'll park your truck closer, whatever it is. Um, I would always recommend buying the item.

**Travis:** Yep. If you want it, you should buy it.

**Teresa:** And having them... y'know, asking them for the service of holding it on—holding onto it. Because holding it without paying for it, you better know that vendor really well.

**Travis:** Yeah. Um, and also, though, you should – a little caveat – if you buy something and then ask them to hold onto it, right? Stuff can always happen. Stuff can get broken. Different people manning the same tent might accidentally sell a thing you have bought. So, it's not something I would do just every time, automatically. Like, "Okay, and please hold onto it for me so I can keep my hands empty." I would only do it if it's a large item, and I would like, make sure, like, watch them put some kind of tag or piece of paper on it or something before you walk away.

**Teresa:** Sure. That's a great idea.

**Travis:** Um, this is from Parker. "How do I politely ask someone to stop crowding me while I'm looking at something?"

**Teresa:** Um, I think there's a different tactic between maybe a vendor or an employee crowding you, and then another buyer crowding you.

**Travis:** Yeah. I think this is probably asking about like, buyer on the other side of the table.

**Teresa:** Y'know, don't be that guy.

**Travis:** Yeah, hey. Step number one. Don't crowd someone.

**Teresa:** [laughing]

**Travis:** I have found, just speaking my own experience of like, looking at tables of stuff everywhere I go, um... think of it kind of a little bit like a cafeteria line. And once you've like, examined two feet of a table, move two feet over to look at something else, and let them step in. But y'know what?

A lot of the times, I've found the fastest way to put a stop to that politely is to just look them in the eye and say, "Excuse me."

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** And like, because a lot of time, they are probably just so in their own like, "I'm doing what I want, 'cause I want something," that they have forgotten that other people are affected by their actions. And if you can just remind them, like, "I'm a human being who's standing here." They will like, calm down.

**Teresa:** I think 'excuse me,' 'excuse me, please,' things like that, perfectly workable. If you find that it is, y'know, a um... excuse me, a clerk or a vendor, you can say, "I'm just taking a look around."

**Travis:** Mm-hmm. "Just looking."

**Teresa:** Stuff like that.

**Travis:** And listen – this is the last thing I'll say. If at any point...

**Teresa:** It's not the last thing you'll say. [laughs]

**Travis:** It's not. I'll say many more things in my life. If at any point, you feel like a vendor is being too aggressive, or being too loud at you... this is a question...

**Teresa:** Or like, just being creepy. Creepin' you out.

**Travis:** Right, or just making you uncomfortable.

**Teresa:** Walk. Away.

**Travis:** Is like, walk right away. Like, don't worry that you're being rude by walking away or whatever. Like...



**Teresa:** If anything feels off at all. That includes the merchandise. If you think that the merchandise is sketchy, um, or...

**Travis:** Dip.

**Teresa:** Yeah, or illegal, perhaps. [laughs] Uh, you can just leave. Just leave.

**Travis:** And y'know what? If you want just to put, like, that like, "Okay, thank you!" And then walk away. Right?

**Teresa:** Sure.

**Travis:** Boom. Um, so that's gonna do it for us. I know this is a little bit of a short episode, but I've gotta hit the road, 'cause I'm going to a charity event in Bridgeport, West Virginia. Uh, if you're listening to this on Friday, it's going to be on Saturday, the 24<sup>th</sup>. I guess if you're listening to it on Saturday... y'know what, whenever you're listening to it.

I'm going to be—actually, my dad and I, Clint and I, are going to be in, uh, Bridgeport, West Virginia, at Four Horsemen Comics and Gaming, Saturday the 24<sup>th</sup> at 11:00AM for a Q&A panel. And then we're doing a signing at 12:30PM. And the signing is a \$20 donation, which is then going to West Virginia Children's Medical, I believe. Or West Virginia Medical Children's. And uh, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

We've partnered with Extra Life for Kids to help out, so you should come to that. August 24<sup>th</sup>, 11:00AM, Bridgeport, West Virginia at Four Horsemen Comics and Gaming. Um, and I'm also gonna be at DragonCon next weekend. Uh, you can find the details for that at [TravisMcElroy.com](http://TravisMcElroy.com).

Um, and then we're doing live shows there too, in Atlanta and Orlando. Shmammers will not be at the MBMBaM show in Atlanta, but I believe we will be at the Orlando one.

**Teresa:** Yep.

**Travis:** We need to think of a live show for that, so if you have any ideas...

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Please. Let us know.

**Teresa:** Email us at [ShmannersCast@gmail.com](mailto:ShmannersCast@gmail.com), and pay attention for maybe... I don't—we don't usually take questions for that.

**Travis:** No, but speaking of, we know what our next episode is going to be.

**Teresa:** That's right!

**Travis:** Next week is going to be about crowds, with Alison Rosen. Special guest, Alison Rosen is going to come on the show to help us talk about crowds and crowd etiquette. So right after I put this episode up, I am going to tweet out that question, uh, the looking for questions. So make sure to respond to that with your questions about crowds.

**Teresa:** And you can find us @ShmannersCast, and let's see... also, we want to shout out some thank yous. Thank you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art. Thank you to Brent "Brental Floss" Black for writing our theme music. That is available as a ringtone where those are sold.

Thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover banner of the fan-run Facebook group... whoo, I don't know why that was so hard! Shmanners, Fanners, which you should join if you would love to give and get excellent advice. Also thank you to our research assistant, Alex. She is killin' it lately. Lovin' it. Thank you so much, Alex.

**Travis:** And thank you to Maximum Fun, our podcast home. Go listen to all the other amazing, fun shows there, and you can join us again next week.

**Teresa:** No RSVP required.

**Travis:** You've been listening to Shmanners.

**Teresa:** Manners, Shmanners. Get it?

[theme music plays]

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