

Shmanners 8: Travel: Trains and Automobiles

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Travis:

Next stop, podcast station.

Teresa:

All aboard!

Travis:

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 this is Shmanners.

Teresa:

It's extraordinary etiquette...

Travis:

...for ordinary occasions. You're listening to part two of our travel two parter. Last week's episode was all about, uh, what was it?

Teresa:

Planes.

Travis:

It was planes and boats.

Teresa:

Uh-huh.

Travis:

Planes and boats. Planes and boats.

Teresa:

Planes and boats.

Travis:

This week we're doing trains and automobiles. And, uh—

Teresa:

Yes, trains includes elevated trains and subway trains.

Travis:

That's true. So, it was a lot more applicable than I actually thought [laughs] it was going to be when we said trains. I expected that would be like, 10 seconds of train stuff. So tell me, Teresa, where do you want to start? Do you, like, you want to start with trains?

Teresa:

Let's start with trains and automobiles' shared history.

Travis:

What?

Teresa:

I know. Well, when you think about it, they're really just like, people movers...

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

... And stuff movers.

Travis:

Uh-huh.

Teresa:

Um, and so, um, let's start way, way, way back. 5000 BCE there were things called sledges, right? And their engine was the animal. So not quite like a sleigh, but like, it was kind of a thing on immovable leg rail things. Almost like a sleigh, but not quite like a sleigh.

Travis:

I don't know what it says about my grasp of history, but literally if you had said, 5000 years ago to the invention of the locomotive, I would have been on board.

Teresa:

[laughs]

Travis:

I would have believed every syllable.

Teresa:

Well, I want you to think about, it's kind of like an A-shaped wooden frame, right? That was usually covered with animal skin. And a horse would drag it behind it like a cart, but the...it didn't have wheels.

Travis:

Oh, okay. So it, more like it had like, skis. You said rails and I got confused for a second. You mean like it's not on a track.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

It's got like, you know, skis kind of that it slides along the ground?

Teresa:

Sort of, yes.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

Um, so then after that they added wheels and turned the sledges into carts. Um, and the wheel first appeared around 3500 BCE, um, and it was one of the greatest inventions of prehistoric times.

Travis:

I've heard a lot about this. Do we know who did it?

Teresa:

No.

Travis:

Oh, okay.

Teresa:

Uh, we don't even really know why. It was just kind of just a better idea.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

Um, a leading theory is that a group of prehistoric people may have been rolling a heavy load along a tree trunk one day when they suddenly realized if they chopped the logs like salami, they could make the slices into wheels.

Travis:

Invention used to be so easy, you guys. I think Justin's talked about this on Sawbones too. Like, yeah, yeah, yeah. Like, the, oh, just chop the end off the tree. It's so— [laughs] It's so obvious.

Teresa:

Right. Well, so like, these wheels were huge and heavy, and they were solid. So, they were difficult to carve. Um, and they were probably more oblong

than, like, round. It's pretty hard to get something perfectly round, you know?

Travis:

Yes, yes I do.

Teresa:

So, next appeared a rounder wheel made from separate wooden spokes, right?

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

So, this is—

Travis:

Like a wagon wheel.

Teresa:

Like a wagon wheel. Like of a chariot wheel.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

Right. So, Chariots were the next things that the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, they all use the chariot. And do you know why the chariot really worked in those places?

Travis:

'Cause the ground was hard?

Teresa:

The ground was hard, and there wasn't a lot of shrubs and stuff in the way.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

Right? So, that's why those Mediterranean type countries really forged ahead in the wheeled vehicle department, whereas some of the more Eastern European and, um, hilly countries like Britannia really did not get as far ahead at this point.

Travis:

Gotcha.

Teresa:

'Cause it's hard- it's hard to drive those wheels over, like, rocks and stuff.

Travis:

I'll take your word for it. I've never done it, but I believe you.

Teresa:

[laughs]. All right. So there were a couple of, uh, general improvements, but this is where things really split.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

So, you either take the wagon route pulled by a horse, right? Or you put the wheels on a track. So, you can only use the tracked one where you've built the track.

Travis:

But, you know, the ground is nice and level. You know you're not going to run into like, any swampland or big hills or anything like that. And there's less friction, and it moves a lot easier.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

Right.

Teresa:

And you can carry a lot more heavy loads, and you can hitch several wagons together, right? So like a wagon train. Or you can explore places unknown with wagon wheels on the horse.

Travis:

Gotcha.

Teresa:

So way back as far as 1812.

Travis:

Uh-huh.

Teresa:

Really before all this business got, uh, super industrialized and crisscrossed different countries, uh, Oliver Evans, who was an American engineer and inventor, he published a version of what steam railways could become. So, this is where the steam locomotive has really started to be developed.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

Um, and he was thinking that cities and towns would be linked by a network of long distance railways, applied by speed locomotives, uh, greatly speeding up personal travel and goods transport.

Travis:

Man, he was a real forward thinker.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

That did, like, happen and stuff [laughs].

Teresa:

It didn't happen right away, though. Because we still hadn't, um, really done the Great Western expansion. And it just, it didn't really take hold in the United States until the 1830s.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

The first transcontinental railroad in the United States was completed in 1869. So, if you think about all the way back from like, [laughs] 1812 to 1869, it really took a long time. There was a lot of land to be acquired, and track to be railed, and all kinds of stuff like that.

Travis:

And is that the golden spike? Is that that thing? I think, I don't know for sure, but I remember that when they finished the transcontinental railroad, they hammered a golden spike in at like, the center where the two met.

Teresa:

Woo! That's cool.

Travis:

And the only reason I always think of that is 'cause there's a golden spike at the Dead Center, the Geographic Center of Disneyland. And that's what I think of every time I see it.

Teresa:

Right. So, then the whole system was almost completely built. So, all the cars and the rails and, um, the, you know, facili— Everything that you need to ship people, things, grain and hogs and all that kind of stuff, um, were completely built by 1910. But do you see what happens in 1910?

Travis:

Is it World I?

Teresa:

No.

Travis:

No. No. Way off.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

I was wrong.

Teresa:

Cars have already come on the scene.

Travis:

Oh, of course! Cars. Okay.

Teresa:

So, once the whole thing is like, built and underway and people are using it, trucks start to arrive to eat away freight traffic and automobiles. Then airplanes devour passenger traffics. So, they pretty much after 1940 switched from steam to diesel, which became more efficient. But there's still, there wasn't as much interest in traveling by train.

Travis:

In case you were wondering, the golden spike, uh, was driven on May 10th, 1869, at Promontory Summit, Utah Territory. So that, I was right.

Teresa:

You- you were right. 1869.

Travis:

Uh, a rare accurate fact [laughs] from the recesses of my brain. So, I guess the curious thing... I, uh... I guess I pictured in my head that there was a long period of time in which railway travel was not only common but, like, super dominant. But I guess, like, by the time it would have been extremely dominant, it was already kind of surpassed by the invention of the car. At least not, if not surpassed, like, running pretty concurrently.

Teresa:

Right. Um, so, Nicholas August Auto is pretty much considered the father of the efficient gasoline engine for cars.

Travis:

Hence the automobile.

Teresa:

I'm not quite sure if they're...

Travis:

No? Okay.

Teresa:

If they're completely related, but..

Travis:

That's probably not the same [laughs] thing. But you know what? Um, a boy can dream.

Teresa:

Right. Um, so, and that was during the 1860s. So like, right as soon as all this railway stuff, at least in America, was pretty much, you know, on its way, that's when the automotive industry started [laughs].

Travis:

So it seems to me like, very much like, when we talked about cruises and boat travel last week, that trains would kind of naturally become a luxury travel. That it's like, Oh, you need to get across the country? Do it in style. No one needs to drive. You can get a sleeper car. And there's a smoking car, and a lounge car.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

And it's basically like a cruise ship on land.

Teresa:

Exactly, exactly. Um, and so, there are a couple of different, um, everybody thinks of Model T Fords, right?

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

That's what they think about when they think about cars. Um, but there was actually the Mercedes-Benz was before the Model T.

Travis:

What? And I also assumed there was model A through S?

Teresa:

Uh, not completely. There are only eight models in front of the Model T.

Travis:

Oh, was that actually close? 'Cause I making that up. Was that a real thing?

Teresa:

Yeah.

Travis:

I just assumed that, like, you didn't start at T. What kind of crazy person would start at T?

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

Well, I mean, It is the best letter. Travis! What's up?

Teresa:

Uh, uh, there was a model A, B, C, F, N, R, S & K before he came up with T. I don't know why he skipped so many letters in there.

Travis:

What in the world? [laughs].

Teresa:

I don't know.

Travis:

Was that all the letters they had back then?

Teresa:

No.

Travis:

I also don't know how this works.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

Did they not invent more letters until like, 1915? They were like, "This is weird. Why does it jump around like this? We need to fill in the blanks." Was it like the periodic table of elements where they just had to like, discover H?

Teresa:

I don't think so. So-

Travis:

Well, I don't know. Science may never know.

Teresa:

So, Benz, uh, uh, Carl Benz, who was a German engineer, he was developing a successful four wheeled car by the start of the 20th century. Um, but the problem, the problem with his car, um, is they named it the Viktoria, with a K, which I think is fun. Uh, the Viktoria had a price tag of £9,000 pounds in that day and age, which is £50,000 today.

Travis:

Wow!

Teresa:

So, no one could afford a car. So, even in the beginning when there were cars, not a lot of people had them. So, trains were still, you know, in the forefront.

Travis:

Uh, if you... And also, if you think about it, you want to move. Uh, trains are logically more efficient. If you think about the amount of people you can move, uh, it, they're not as versatile, but they're way more efficient.

Teresa:

Right. Um, and then there are lots of other things that contributed. Goodyear developed the first, um, the hardened rubber black rubber tire. Almost by accident. Crazy, right? Almost by accident in, um, oh, uh, in the 19th century.

Travis:

Okay. Vulcanized rubber. Yes.

Teresa:

Yes.

Travis:

Yes. Yes.

Teresa:

So we mentioned it already. The Ford Model T is basically the standard at which all, almost all other cars are built from today. Um, he wanted it cheap, and he wanted the masses to be able to use it. So then-

Travis:

Well, that's the assembly line, right?

Teresa:

Right. He—

Travis:

The assembly line is that everything fit together so you could make them far cheaper, because you didn't have to, like, have skilled labor to put together each one.

Teresa:

Exactly.

Travis:

You just had to have people put together this one part and pass it down.

Teresa:

So then, we get to where we are today, where one quarter of the world's cars are in America.

Travis:

We did it!

Teresa:

We did it! So many cars.

Travis:

We're number one!

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

USA! USA!

Teresa:

Yes.

Travis:

Now, I will say, there's a really great episode of, um, Adam Ruins Everything, if you're kind of interested in, um, uh, in a little bit more of the true story of

the history of cars. But I have an interesting fact to talk about. And that is jaywalking.

Teresa:

Oh, really?

Travis:

Yes. Adam Ruins Everything taught me this. And that originally, um, streets were not made for cars. When they introduced cars, you know, cars were mostly like, uh, well, you go out in the country and drive around, and then people wanted to drive around in the streets, but there weren't, like, speed limits or anything like that, so it was very unsafe.

And then people were getting hit by cars. And at first it was, like, So we shouldn't allow cars on the street. And instead they turned around and started an ad campaign smearing basically people who cross the street without waiting for lights, and calling them jaywalkers.

And at the time, Jay was an incredibly offensive term, basically meaning like, uneducated hillbilly. That if you were ever called Jay, it was like, "How dare you, Sir?" And through that ad campaign, it became a law, and that's how the streets became ruled by cars.

Teresa:

Wow! My little fun fact is, originally cars weren't driven by wheels or steering wheels. They were driven by, like, a joystick-like thing.

Travis:

I've seen, like, I've seen old, you know, versions at museums and stuff. It seems remarkably complicated [laughs]. Like, so ridiculously complicated, that, uh, were that true today, no one will get their license except like, 14 year olds who grew up playing video games.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

They'd be the only ones who could figure it out. Be like, Oh yeah, it's completely obvious. You just got to hit the four triggers—

Teresa:

I think eventually people would figure it out. I mean, everybody liked the Atari.

Travis:

I mean, that, I guess that's true. Well, not everybody liked the Atari.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

It actually took a... It actually took [laughs] quite a long time for video games to become universally popular. But anyway, so tell me about some train etiquette.

Teresa:

Okay.

Travis:

And now, I also wanted, just like, uh, in the cruise episode, let me be straightforward here, I have never ridden on a train. I mean, I've ridden on a subway. I've ridden on like, an elevated train, but I've never been on, like a, you know, luxury train for longer than like, you know, 20 minutes, 30 minutes, going from like, Manhattan to somewhere. Um, so this is all new to me. I'm very excited. Cannot wait to ride on a train for the first time. So, prepare me for it, please.

Teresa:

Great. Well, Emily says, Emily Post.

Travis:

Oh, you're on first name basis now?

Teresa:

Yes, we are.

Travis:

E-Post tells me...

Teresa:

[laughs]. She says that all the same rules of planes apply to trains and buses.

Travis:

Okay.

Teresa:

So, if you haven't, go ahead and stop the podcast, listen to last week, and then we're done, right?

Travis:

You know, if you did listen to last week, um, delete it off your phone and then redownload it.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

'Cause we always like them numbers.

Teresa:

No, I'll go over a little bit here. Um, so, other than the things we already talked about for airplane travel, try not to monopolize those tables and, like, diner areas or the diner car, um, because there really aren't enough seating for everyone who's bought a ticket to sit down at the same time. So you should really leave it to when you are eating.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

Say, like, 30 minutes to an hour. Because almost everything else can be done on your lap or on a fold-down tray.

Travis:

Okay. Now, let's make it specific to subways for a second. Um, what are the rules as far as, like, you know, crowded train? I, and I know that it's, like, pregnant ladies, older people, um, people who may be injured or something, like, give up your seat, right?

Teresa:

Well, it's not a rule per se, but it's...

Travis:

No, I don't think you're going to get arrested if you don't do it. But I mean, like, you should do it.

Teresa:

It is always appropriate for an able bodied person to give up their seat to someone who may need it more.

Travis:

And what, uh, uh, what about... 'Cause I have been in this position before, where like, I've had a backpack or like, luggage. You know, if I'm taking the subway to like, my hotel from JFK and I've got my luggage with me and it's sitting on the seat next to me, and when somebody walks on the subway, do I need to like, move it? Do I need to like, offer the— my backpack seat to people? That seems right, right?

Teresa:

If seats are in short supply, absolutely yes, you should remove your luggage or your things from the seat next to you. Um, and what you can do, especially with the backpack, is instead of sitting it on the seat next to you, you can turn it around and face it on your lap. Um, and a lot of overnight trains, not subways, um, they have actual luggage compartments that you can put your luggage in.

Travis:

Oh.

Teresa:

You don't have to worry about it being on floor.

Travis:

Sarah asked this, "How do I get other people to give up their seats for children, pregnant women, the elderly on a train? Is there a polite way to say to someone else, like, 'Hey, I think you should give up your seat to that person?'"

Teresa:

Well, certainly if you're with a traveling companion and you lead by example, that's the best way to start that ball rolling, is to, you know, offer up your own seat and hopefully other, um, riders will follow suit.

Travis:

I would also say, here's my sneaky way I would do it.

Teresa:

Okay.

Travis:

Address the person who needs the seat. And say, I wish someone would give you their seat. It's awful rude that no one's offering you their seat.

Teresa:

That's a little passive aggressive.

Travis:

I know. But I think it's, uh, I... If I were the person not getting up, I would way prefer that than to someone looking at me and going, "Hey, give up your seat." Like, I would rather have [laughs] somebody say to me go, "Oh yeah, of course. Sorry [laughs]. I, uh, I have my headphones and I wasn't thinking."

There's lots of little excuses you could make. But I would say, passive aggressive in this scenario. I don't always advocate passive aggressive, but this seems correct to me.

Teresa:

Well, in general when you get on a train or a shared train like a subway, you should move towards the center of the car to allow people on and allow people off.

Um, but the reality is you paid your fare just the same as everybody else, so making someone giving, uh, give up their seat, uh, begrudgingly, probably not such a good idea. But if you lead by example, giving up your seat to someone elderly, infirmed, pregnant, young child, something like that, I'm, uh, pretty much people want to do the right thing.

Travis:

Lee asked a very similar question, which is, uh, "When I'm on the train, is there a way I can politely ask someone to move their backpack off of the other seat so I can sit down?"

Teresa:

If that's the only seat available and you need to sit down, you can say, "Excuse me, please. May I sit down?"

Travis:

Yeah, I feel like, or is this seat taken, you know? Because it's possible that, like, they sat that down, they put their backpack there while their traveling companion went to the restroom or to look at a map or something. Like, I would say that either, may I sit here, or Is this seat taken in a pleasant non-frustrated tone.

Teresa:

I always think, like, the— If you say may I sit here, it's harder for someone to say no you may not sit here.

Travis:

That's true.

Teresa:

Than it is for if you say, Is the seat taken, they say yeah it's taken.

Travis:

Yeah, that is a little bit hard to— If I'm like, "No it ain't [laughs]." And I sit down.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

I guess you're right [laughs]. It's a little bit harder to then come back with a third option.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

Okay, fair enough.

Teresa:

Oh, and if you are on one of these, uh, bus or train situations where you have paid for a single ticket like a Megabus, um, you really should not seat jump unless...

Travis:

Unless? Is that what you were waiting for?

Teresa:

Yeah, that's what I was waiting for.

Travis:

Okay. I'm sorry.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

I don't just give out unleses.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

I don't just throw the... If you're listening, that's the thing we do on My Brother, My Brother and Me.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

And I don't do anywhere else. And Justin and Griffin and I don't do outside the show [laughs].

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

But my wife just looked at me like she was offended that I didn't do it.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

"How dare you not unless me?" Okay, unless what?

Teresa:

Unless you find that you're bothered by your seatmates. And then you may of course move. But if you paid for one ticket, you should get one seat. And once the train or bus or whatever starts rolling, that's pretty much where you're stuck.

Travis:

Let me tell you, if you've never done that Megabus before, is choice. I mean, I would say that it is not as great as flying. Like, we took a Megabus from Chicago to Cincinnati, which flight would've been an hour, maybe max.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

15 minutes of that being takeoff and landing. And the drive was like, six hours. But we took the seats up on top that were, like, had our own like, front window. It had Wi-Fi. It was pretty great, you guys.

Teresa:

And it was super cheap.

Travis:

Yeah, it was super. Oh, I think we paid like, \$10 each.

Teresa:

Yeah, I think so.

Travis:

It was... It's great. Don't be afraid of the Megabus. I feel like since we started talking about the Megabus, it's a good transition into the automobile. But first, here's a word from another Max Fun show.

[theme music plays]

Carrie:

Okay, I've got a list of things we can do for our podcast Oh, No! Ross and Carrie.

Ross:

You got some ideas?

Carrie:

Yeah, I think so. Okay, you ready?

Ross:

Yeah. Yeah.

Carrie:

Okay, we could get your candled.

Ross:

No, that was one of our first episodes.

Carrie:

Oh, right. Okay, we could get hypnotherapy.

Ross:

No, we went to, like, a school for it.

Carrie:

Oh, okay. Uh, we could join the Mormons.

Ross:

Uh, we got baptized, don't you remember?

Carrie:

Okay. Well, what if we went to, uh, an occult meeting or cryotherapy, or took a juice cleanse, or ate only Soylent for a month?

Ross:

No, we did them.

Carrie:

Reiki!

Ross:

You're a practitioner.

Carrie:

We could join Christian Science, so we could go to pet psychics, or to astrology, or go to the Queen Mary where they have those ghost hunts.

Ross:

Done them all.

Carrie:

That's my whole list.

Ross:

Well, what else can we do? I mean, this is Los Angeles.

Carrie:

Well, I guess we could do that one thing.

Ross:

Oh.

Carrie:

The scary thing.

Ross:

The one that everybody's asked us to do since we started the show.

Carrie:

Yeah. For, like, five years. Am I being clear?

Ross:

Yeah, let's do it.

Carrie:

Okay. But if I die, you have to tell my family that I love them, and that they can hear the episode on iTunes or at maximumfun.org.

Ross:

I'll tell them.

Carrie:

Thanks, Ross.

[theme music plays]

Travis:

So tell me, oh, oh Teresa, there's oh, so many questions.

Teresa:

Oh, really?

Travis:

About the automobile. And a, uh, proper, um, proper etiquette when facing an automobile ride.

Teresa:

Okay.

Travis:

I'm going to go through a couple of different things. One, in a taxi cab.

Teresa:

Uh-huh.

Travis:

In what circumstance do you have to sit up front?

Teresa:

I think that it's personal preference. Um, in some of these rideshare companies, I prefer to sit up front. Um, but in, like, an actual New York cab, they usually have glass separators, or I guess it's, you know, plexiglass separator where you're supposed to sit in the back.

So I think that that's really the distinction for me. There is always the option to sit in the back if you are being ferried from one place to another in a taxi style cab. Um, but if it's one of those rideshare things, you shouldn't be afraid to sit up front.

Travis:

If you're going to get into a taxi, you shouldn't know where you're going before you get in the taxi. Like, I have never been a taxi cab driver, but I imagine that it happens, and it's very frustrating.

And I've heard stories from other people who have had this happen to them, and who have done the Lyft and who are Uber drivers and Lyft drivers, where they've been, like, where are you going? And the person's like, Um.. And it's like, why did you get in? Why did you call me? You don't know where you're going.

Teresa:

You know what's really great about those rideshare things, is you can actually program in your destination when you call one so that, uh, it sends the GPS marker straight to their phone and they know exactly where you're going.

Travis:

Let me ask you the question that was kind of our, uh, our elbows on the table question. Our elbows question.

Teresa:

Okay.

Travis:

When it comes to, say you're riding with a friend for a long period of time, right? Long enough that this is a concern, who controls the music? Who controls the entertainment? Is it the driver or is it the person in the passenger seat?

Teresa:

My general feeling is that the driver is the captain of the ship. He's in, he or she is in charge of all safety regulations. And so, they need to be in charge of all the buttons, the music, the windows, all of that stuff.

I think that before you get into a car with someone that you, you know, may not know their unspoken kind of rules, what kind of music they listen to, or if they like it cold or hot, you should talk about that kind of thing and say, "Oh, I made a playlist. Um, would you like to listen to some of the music that I brought?" Or, uh, "gosh, I'm really warm today, can I put the window down?"

You know, all this stuff can really be discussed beforehand, and then you won't have to have so much of a problem. Um, but always ask. I think that the... That most drivers are benevolent enough to allow the rest of the passengers in the car some freedom as well.

Travis:

Uh, I would say that a long distance car drive between two people is a lot like a marriage in a lot of ways.

Teresa:

[laughs] Oh, yeah?

Travis:

And the number one way being, if you do not communicate, if you don't say like, "Hey, you know, I need to stop, I'm hungry," or like, "Oh, it's a little bit chilly in here, and the music's too loud," or, we had a question, um, from Jordan, "What's the best way to handle riding with someone you think is driving recklessly?"

I think all of these, if you don't say in the moment, like, "Hey man, eyes on the road," or like, "Hey, be careful, you know, we're going 70 miles an hour." If you don't say it, especially if you're in the car with someone for like, eight, twelve hours or two, like, ten hour days or something, then you're just sitting there stewing on it, and you're going to end up getting kind of, you know, kind of snarky and a little bit like, crusty with each other, and a little bit salty.

And I think it's said, it's better to just say. like, "Hey, is it cool if we turn the music down for a second? And I'd like to take a nap."

Teresa:

And, you know, just like a marriage, "I" statements are very helpful. I would feel more comfortable if you drove the speed limit. I am very warm, can we turn up the AC? I would like some peace and quiet. So that the person doesn't feel like you're kind of nagging.

Travis:

Yeah. I mean, and that's the thing. Like, you're on a journey together. Part, and you know what? Part of it's the journey, and not the destination.

Teresa:

Oh, boy.

Travis:

So you should enjoy your time there. We drove across the country. And here's the thing. At the end of the day, you also have to realize, no matter how well you communicate with someone, and no matter how much you love them and how well you get along, at a certain point after being in a car together for a long period of time, you are just going to get a little salty. I mean, as human beings, we're not meant to be in a car for like, 15 hours. You know what I mean?

Teresa:

Yeah.

Travis:

So, just like, be patient with each other, and like, take breaks. There was such a huge transition... When I was like, 21 and driving back to college, or like, 22 and driving or, like, I used to be the person who did not stop.

Like, it would, uh... I would go as long as I could without stopping the car. And usually I only stop when I need to gas. And like, if I needed to use the bathroom I would just hold that for hours.

Teresa:

Whoa! That's a recipe for disaster.

Travis:

No, I'm like a monk. I've got... Uh, you know, like, how Sting, you know, Sting?

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

That's it. I only pee once a day. Now, it does take me 45 minutes.

Teresa:

Sounds right.

Travis:

Um, but here's the thing. But, like, there came a time where I realized, like, "Oh, you can just stop." Like, the only time frame is in your head. Like, you're not racing a clock.

And it's, like, suddenly like, my world changed when I realized just, like, enjoy the surroundings. If you see something cool and you want to pull over and take a pic, do it. All right. What else you got from me before I give you some more questions?

Teresa:

Um, so, we talked about a little bit of people inside the car, but I want to talk about the car on the road. And I really think that safe roads and good manners are different sides of the same equation.

Travis:

Now, this is a very personal issue for you. Is that correct?

Teresa:

Yes. Because we now live in LA. And every time I get behind the wheel of a car, I am certain that my death is inside that vehicle [laughs].

Travis:

Mm-hmm. Yeah. That your, uh, that your passenger is death.

Teresa:

Yes. Um, so remember that all the rules that apply to safety also apply to manners. So, allowing good space between cars, signaling properly, obeying speed limits.

Travis:

Don't respond in anger.

Teresa:

Don't respond in anger. So keeping calm. Um, merging properly and, you know, allowing people to merge, um, keeping your horns short and appropriate. Laying on the horn really just engenders anger, um.

Travis:

Your horn should really only be used to draw attention to, "Hey, I'm right here." Or like, "Hey, look out." Like, I, we talked at My Brother, My Brother, and Me about inventing many other horns. And someday, someday science will give us other horns.

Teresa:

Someday.

Travis:

But right now you should really only use your horn as an emergency. Like, please don't merge over here. I'm here.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

You know, that kind of thing.

Teresa:

And you should, when you're passing, you should pass in the left hand lane, then return to a cruising lane on the other side.

Travis:

After you've passed at least a vehicle's distance.

Teresa:

Right. Yes, keeping, maintaining proper distance. You should keep intersections clear, um, because if you are that last car trying to turn right and you block the intersection, you're going to mess up traffic patterns, and

people are going to get angry and lay on the horn, and you're all going to die.

Travis:

The important thing is, a lot like we talked about in part one of this on the plane, is that we are all in this together. But even more so I would say on the road, because literally everyone's safety is dependent on how everyone else acts.

Teresa:

Right. And each person is driving a two ton death machine.

Travis:

Yeah. And you know what? I would, uh, I would say the number one thing that we think when we're driving around LA and we see someone driving, not only recklessly, but discourteously, is that that person is so very clearly through their actions, showing that they think that their time is more important than everyone else's.

And that they have to be there five seconds before anyone else. And I think that if everybody just, like, went, You know what? Even if I'm late, or even if I don't get home as quickly as I would like, at least I'll get there. At least everyone else will get there too.

Teresa:

Yeah.

Travis:

Someone today almost caused me to get into an accident because they drove recklessly. And I would've had nothing to do with it. Now, let me ask you this. This was a big one. Gas money.

Teresa:

Mm-hmm.

Travis:

How is it appropriate to either ask for or offer gas money? Jordan wants to know on Facebook.

Teresa:

Um, I think it really depends on, is this a recurring theme? Because once a person has driven you around...

Travis:

Uh-huh.

Teresa:

... I would say more than one round trip, so home and back, you should offer gas money. Um, and it should be... I don't think that you have to pay for a full tank of gas, but if a gallon of gas is \$2.50, you at least owe them \$5.

Travis:

I think, uh, it's important too to gauge the inconvenience level. Like, if someone's going to pick, come pick me up at LAX, I'm giving them \$20.

Teresa:

Yeah.

Travis:

I'm, at the very least, offering to give them \$20. And I think that, like, the general rule of like, offer twice, you know, like, "No, please." Okay. Like, I think offer twice, and then accept the third denial. Um, and vice versa.

I think that you're completely within your rights if someone's like, "Hey, can you do this incredibly inconvenient thing for me?" I think you're completely within your rights to say, like, "Well, would you be able to provide gas money? 'Cause I think it's going to take me like, a half hour to get there."

Teresa:

Right. Or maybe instead of gas money you trade in favors. So like, I have a very kind friend here in LA who we often go to the same social engagements, but Travis and I, we only have one car.

So, if I would like to go, I often do ask her for rides, but then I offer to pay for her food or a drink for her. Or I say, "Okay, now, it's, next time it's my turn to do it." So that you can really pass this back and forth, and it doesn't have to be, uh, awkward.

Travis:

Yeah. And keep that in mind, don't take advantage of your friend with a car. I hear about that a lot in bigger cities like New York, where, like, maybe only one friend in the friend group will have a car.

If that's the case, make sure that you are making sure that person is provided for, and that gas is covered. But on the other side of that, if you're the type of person who always insists on driving, you can't then expect everybody to then also... If other people offer to drive and you're like, "No, I'd prefer to drive." Okay, well, that was the decision that you made.

Teresa:

Sure. But I still think that if that's like, a constant thing, you should offer something, maybe not gas, maybe pay for a drink, when they're not driving. Or, um, uh, uh, some other token.

Travis:

Oh, that's a huge thing. Don't drink and drive.

Teresa:

Yeah, guys.

Travis:

That's the rudest [laughs], I would say, and terrible. And, uh, it's such, uh, a reckless, immature complete— Especially in this day and age. And I know they're not everywhere has a thriving or maybe not even an existing rideshare program.

But as those become more, uh, more widespread, and as, like, it's more and more common for taxi cabs to be everywhere, and rideshare to be

everywhere, don't drink and drive. Now, here's another big topic I got a bunch of questions for you on, Teresa McElroy.

Teresa:

All right, hit me.

Travis:

Shotgun. That old—

Teresa:

Do you mean, the sitting in the front seat?

Travis:

I mean shotgun. So, when growing up, our method was, we kind of had like, a round robin like, Justin's turn, Travis' turn, Griffin's turn, to the point where we were, like, on point.

So even if you weren't in the car with, uh... Like, it was just Justin and Griffin. Uh, if it was like, just Griffin and I, and it was Justin's turn, Justin's turn was then forfeit, because the majority of us were in the car and he missed his chance to be in the front seat. It was heated.

Teresa:

That's intense.

Travis:

Yeah.

Teresa:

Um, I don't recall ever enjoying that sort of, um, fervor with my sisters. Travis has a family of three boys, and my family was three girls. Um, I know that I often did not sit in the very back row of our minivan. I sat in the middle row if I sat, if I didn't sit in the passenger seat. 'Cause I get motion sickness.

Travis:

That's so funny, 'cause we had the opposite. Like, my brothers and I, we had the captains chairs. It's like the middle seats.

Teresa:

Okay.

Travis:

Which was great because you had your own seat, but you couldn't lay out to the back seat. We kind of rotated on long car trips. But almost always Griffin got it because Griffin fell asleep three seconds after we got in the car.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

And then like, nobody wanted to wake him up and move him, 'cause he was asleep. But, uh, the... I mean, there's general shots—

Teresa:

It pays to be the baby.

Travis:

Oh, yeah. [mocking] And it's, uh, the baby.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

I feel like there's like, general shotgun rules. And maybe, and I'm sure it's different for everyone, but ours was always you have to be in-sight of the vehicle if you're going to call it, um, that you can't call permanent. If you just had it, you're now out of the rotation. There was a lot of rules. But Rachel wants to know at what age is it inappropriate now to call shotgun? Can you still do it as an adult?

Teresa:

Um, I think it is inappropriate to say, I call shotgun, but it's perfectly appropriate to say, Does anyone mind if I take the front seat?

Travis:

And I think, um, I kind of... I guess our default is that we always kind of offer it if we're picking someone up. We offer them shotgun.

Teresa:

Yeah, the guest gets the seat of honor.

Travis:

Especially if it's someone visiting from out of town. And it's like, Hey, do you want to, like, sit up here and ask me questions and, like, look out the windshield?

Teresa:

When people visit us, I love it when they want to sit in the front seat. I love to sit in the back seat and close my eyes and make sure that I can't see anything so that, um, I don't freak out every time someone almost hits us.

Travis:

Speaking of backseat driving though. Backseat driving. Annoying? Sometimes with purpose? This is what Daniel wants to know.

Teresa:

Mm-hmm. Unless you're giving directions, actively giving directions, I really think that you should keep it to yourself. Um, unless you feel in danger for your life, and then, put it into a positive. Instead of saying, "Oh you're driving too fast," you'd say, "I would feel more comfortable if you would drive the speed limit."

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

Or, um, "Why didn't you take that turn back there?" You can say, Can I... "I would like to offer to help navigate, because we seem to have missed our destination." Any of those kind of things that you can stay out of the nagging passive aggressive arena, really takes it from being a backseat driver to someone trying to be helpful.

Travis:

Let's talk a little bit about bus travel.

Teresa:

We did a little bit. Oh, you, uh—

Travis:

Well, a little bit more.

Teresa:

A little bit more.

Travis:

Um, so general rule on this popped into my head, because we were talking about, like, coming back from the airport. We were on a bus. There's a thing here in LA called the Flyaway, which is great. They'll pick you up, like, they're shuttles.

It's great. But there was this dude who had, in the 30 minutes it took us to get back to our Flyaway place, I don't know, 10 different speakerphone conversations. It was blowing my mind. He'd be like...

Teresa:

How unfortunate for him that the whole bus heard his private business. Um, but I think that the same rules that apply to airplane travel and just general etiquette is, if you're going to have— Is that you shouldn't have a loud long conversation, um, uh, in a captive area like that.

Um, and if you do need to have a longer conversation, you can excuse yourself and move towards the back of the bus, away from people. Um, so that, you know, you kind of... It's really just the nicer thing to save people from being in a captive audience to your life like that.

Travis:

And the same goes for, like, headphones when, like, watching a movie on a laptop, or listening to music or a podcast or something, right? Like, I assume

that that's common courtesy, but I've seen people just, like, walk around with music playing through their iPhones.

Teresa:

Yeah, yeah. Um, if it's softer music and it's like, family, inoffensive music, I'm less inclined to say something or be offended. Um, you know, easy listening is okay with me.

Travis:

What about sleeping on the bus or the subway?

Teresa:

This is something that I actually saw a couple of really great viral videos about. Um, where a guy had made a sign, and he like, laid it on his lap to wake him up at a certain station and people actually did it, which was really nice.

Um, I think that, if it's a train or something, that takes a lot of stops, and you're afraid that they've missed their stop, you are welcome to wake them up one time. You wake them up and say, We're at King's Cross Station. And then if they go back to sleep, because that's not their stop, there's really not a lot that you can do. It's not your job to continually be their alarm clock.

Travis:

But what about if you are the person? I think I would be more inclined to sleep on a bus than I would a train, but only 'cause I feel like the bus seats are different. That would be my thing. For me, I don't think it's a matter of rudeness. So much as it is, like, if you're traveling with bags or luggage or anything, I don't know that would— I wouldn't want to fall asleep and basically stop paying attention to my goods.

Teresa:

Right. You don't want to misplace your, uh, like you said, your goods or your luggage. Um, so then don't fall asleep.

Travis:

Mm-hmm.

Teresa:

Do the best you can to do that. Or sleep in shifts if you have a companion with you. Um, I would recommend generally against falling asleep on trains. And I know, oh man, sometimes you just need it. Sometimes you just need it.

Travis:

That's the thing. I feel like that's something... I feel like we meant to say and then didn't say on our last episode when we talked about people traveling in comfortable clothes. I wouldn't do it. I wouldn't sleep on a train. But I'm not going to, like, judge you for doing it.

Teresa:

Right.

Travis:

Like, the idea of sitting there going, "How dare he!" Like, this, uh, it ain't the 1820s anymore. Like, everybody's got their own thing. And you know, we talked about a little bit like falling asleep in a play, like Lin said, in the theater episode. Like, I don't know what that dude's day is like. I don't know where that person's traveling. I'm not going to judge the thing they're doing. It's just a thing I try not to do.

Teresa:

Right. I 100% agree with that. So, I try not to fall asleep on planes and such, and trains and automobiles [laughs].

Travis:

What a great movie.

Teresa:

Um, but if you do encounter someone who has fallen asleep, I say you can safely wake them up one time, and after that it's really not your problem. It is not your concern to wake them up at every stop.

Travis:

Um, and when you wake them up, gentle.

Teresa:

Very gentle.

Travis:

You also don't know, um, what anybody's mental condition is. And some people, if they're woken up suddenly or violently, can respond in not so great ways.

Teresa:

Yeah.

Travis:

That's going to do it for us this week. But before you go, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait. Coming up. We're so, so, so very excited, is the Max Fun Drive.

Now, what is the Max Fun Drive, you ask? This is our first year doing it. This is our first year existing. Let me tell you a little bit about the Max Fun Drive. The magical thing about Max Fun is that it is a donor supported network. What that means is that you, the listener, get the chance every year to not only tell us how much you enjoy our shows, but to support us both financially and spiritually, I would say.

Teresa:

Emotionally.

Travis:

Emotionally, definitely. It just says, like, "Hey, I appreciate the work you're doing. It means a lot to me. Your work has not gone unnoticed." And not only that, you get to feel like you're a part of a much, much bigger, um, powerful unit. I would say that the Max Fun Universe is a wonderful, wonderful place to be. And the closer you get to the center of it, the more it's like a nice warm hug.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

So being, I, uh... We're donors. Um, I love the content that Max Fun puts out, and I would support it even if I didn't have 26,000 shows on the network. I just love it that much.

And here's the thing, you can support it too. And in case you were worried that we're just asking you for money, don't worry, you're going to get plenty back. Not just the warm fuzzy feeling of being a donor, but also you get, uh, different rewards based on the level that you choose to donate at.

But best of all, and I mean this best of all, because I have partaken of all of this, and it's wonderful. You get access to donors only bonus content. And it's not just the bonus content from this year, it's all of it. It's all the back catalog.

There is countless hours, uh, of... You get bonus episodes of Jordan, Jesse, Go!, My Brother, My Brother and Me, Judge John Hodgman. You get access to videos that you're not going to see anywhere else. It's amazing. We did an episode all about— Well, you'll have to listen to it.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

'Cause if I told you, it would spoil it.

Teresa:

What a teaser.

Travis:

But a very, uh, unique performer that you're going to hear all about when you become a donor. And, uh, yeah. So, that's coming up, March 14th.

Teresa:

And that's for new and upgrading donors. So, if you upgrade your pledge, you can get, uh, more, cooler stuff. And there's some really fun thank you gifts that are on the way this year.

Travis:

And we've added a lot of new shows in 2015, 2016. Shows like, We Got this, Can I Pay Your Dog? Um, Getting Curious. Lots of really great shows. So, it's a really great time to update your donation. So yeah, that's coming out. It only lasts for two weeks, and you're going to want to be part of the magic.

So, make sure to mark it on your calendars and pay attention to maximumfun.org. Um, in the meantime, go follow us on Twitter @ShmannersCast. We're going to tweet every time the episode comes out. And just take like, .02 seconds and click that retweet button.

Even if you are sitting there going, I've only got like, five followers. That's awesome. We want to be in front of those five followers. So please click that retweet button. Um, tell your friends on Facebook how much you love the show. Join our Facebook group.

Teresa:

That Facebook Group is getting up there. Thanks for everybody joining.

Travis:

And you can search Shmanners. And I guess I should make this clear, 'cause I've seen people misspell it. S-H-M-A-N-N-E-R-S. There is—

Teresa:

Shmanners.

Travis:

There's no C in it. That would be Schmanners.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

There's no C. It's Shmanners. Um, so follow us on Twitter, join the Facebook group, Go on iTunes. Rate, review, subscribe. Um, even if the review is just like, "great, like, I love it."

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

That's— It helps us move up the charts. It makes us feel really good about ourselves. If you've got ideas for future episodes, let us know. Um, and we're going to tweet and Facebook what our next episode is going to be, 'cause we haven't decided yet. But, oh, it's going to be a good one, you guys.

Teresa:

So many good topics.

Travis:

It's going to be magical. If you have ideas for topics, let us know. You can e-mail us, shmannerscast@gmail.com.

Teresa:

Let's do some thank you notes.

Travis:

Oh yeah! Thank you to Brent "Brentalfloss" Black who did our intro. It's amazing.

Teresa:

And our ringtone.

Travis:

That's the thing, you guys. If you like it, you can go through your Apple device. You can go to the iTunes store and purchase it as a ringtone. Just search for Shmanners in the ringtone section and you could hear our magical ringtone every time somebody tries to reach you. Not through text message for some reason. I guess you could also set up as a text message.

Teresa:

What about that sweet, sweet art?

Travis:

That art was done by Kayla M. Wasil on Twitter. You can follow her @KaylaMWasil. And maybe have her do some work for you because she's incredible. She was an absolute joy to work with, and she does amazing stuff. If you want to see more of her amazing art, and trust me, it is amazing, go to kaylawasil.com K-A-Y-L-A-W-A-S-I-L.com. Just go and look. It's really good, you guys.

Teresa:

And as always, I'm going to send one up to my girl, Emily Post. Thanks, Emily.

Travis:

And I want to say thank you again to maximumfun.org for hosting us. There's a ton of other shows on there. Go check them all out. There's going to be, uh, just so many on there that you love.

Teresa:

Should I say thank you to Wikipedia for all of my information?

Travis:

Did Wikipedia help you out? Thank you James Wikipedia for all of your work.

Teresa:

[laughs].

Travis:

We really appreciate it.

Teresa:

Wikipedia.

Travis:

So join us again next week.

Teresa:

No RSVP required.

Travis:

Thank you for listening to Shmanners.

Teresa:

Manners, Shmanners. Get it?

[theme music plays]

Maximum Fun

A worker-run network
of artist-owned shows
supported directly by you.