

Walk & Talk: London (Video) Transcript

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Hello video viewers, this episode is called Walk and Talk London, although as you can see at this point I'm actually on a bike, making my way from Bloomsbury, in the north of the city centre, down to the south bank of the River Thames, where my walk is going to begin.

So yes, you're going to join me on a walk through central London. It's a bit of an adventure, you'll see some of London's most famous sights, and I'll talk to you in English, of course, throughout the entire thing, hence the title, Walk and Talk London. It's a rambling episode in both senses of the word. Rambling through London, with my feet, and also rambling with my voice.

Now, I'm not a tour guide, so don't expect a history lesson for each location that I visit. There's a little bit of that, but really, this is just a chance for you to hang out with me in London for an hour or so, and I'll chat to you about this and that along the way.

Now as you know, episodes of this podcast have video versions and audio versions, and usually they are the same, but this week they're different.

Obviously the video version this time is a tour of London, but on the audio podcast this week you can hear something different. It's

an episode with recordings of some of my friends and family talking about London. I asked some of my friends and family who've lived in London or still live there, I asked them to send me quick voice notes describing their favourite things to do in the city, and I got some really great bits of inside knowledge and tips for what to do there.

If you listen to it, you can get insights into how Londoners like to enjoy their city, plus you can hear from some of my friends and family, including various returning guests and familiar voices. You can listen to the recordings and then I'll teach you vocabulary that comes up in each one. So that's the audio version of Luke's English Podcast this week.

I think it's a good companion episode to this video, so why not listen to it and subscribe to the audio version of Luke's English Podcast while you're at it. It's available wherever you get your audio podcasts, Apple podcasts, Spotify, Pocket Casts, all the podcast platforms. Just click the link in the description to check it out, or scan this QR code for some podcast links.

But this video version was recorded when I was in London for the day. I was there because I was on my way to visit my parents, who live in the Midlands, a couple of hours away from the city centre. Usually I live in Paris, in France, but it's very easy to travel from Paris to London via the Eurostar train, which goes under the sea, under the English Channel, and drops you off at St Pancras station, not far from the centre of the city.

Usually I don't hang around, I just get on another train, which takes me to where my parents live, but this time I decided to spend the

day in London and record this video while I was there. So let me tell you about the route which I took on this particular day, just to give you an idea of what things you're going to see. So this is London, let me just scroll back.

So this is the Earth, right, you're familiar with it, you probably live here somewhere. Let's zoom in on the UK. Here's obviously France, here's Paris, and the Eurostar, phew, goes under the sea here, under the English Channel, and takes you to London.

So here is the UK, England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, this is the United Kingdom. Anyway, let's zoom in on London. Here we go, here it is.

This is more or less central London. It's pretty big. There's the River Thames that winds its way through the centre of the city.

So after cycling down through Bloomsbury and Hoburn, and then across Waterloo Bridge here, which has fantastic views of the city on both sides, I parked up the bike, and then you'll see that my walking tour starts here, underneath Embankment Bridge on the south bank of the river, and I walked along the south bank past the London Eye, and onto Westminster Bridge, which was very crowded with tourists at this time of year, across Westminster Bridge, past Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament, and then I turned right onto Whitehall, past Downing Street, which is the home of the Prime Minister, left through Horseguards Parade, which is where the Horseguards are based, and onto Horseguards Road. I was originally planning to walk through St James's Park, or walk down the Mall here, to visit Buckingham Palace, maybe drop in on the King, have a cup of tea or something, but I realised I

didn't have time, so I turned right here into Trafalgar Square. Let me just change the way this looks a little bit.

So yes, into Trafalgar Square here, an iconic tourist attraction, where you can see Nelson's Column, and also you can visit the National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery, and then I made my way through the back streets here, into the Soho area and Covent Garden, and a quick visit to Covent Garden Market, and then I made my way into Covent Garden Underground Station, where I took the, was it the Bakerloo line, the Piccadilly line, I can't remember, took the Underground up to Baker Street, which is up here. This is where the video ends, next to the statue of Sherlock Holmes, which can be found just outside the station here somewhere, down here. Not here, this, oh dear, I'm about to get run over by a bus.

Get out of the way, out of the way of the bus, I can't actually get through to it. Anyway, just here there's a statue of Sherlock Holmes, you'll see it at the end of the video. Anyway, that was an overview of my walk through London, where I didn't get hit by a bus or a taxi.

So if you've never been to London, but you're interested in seeing what it's like, while listening to me rambling on in English, this video is for you, or maybe you've already been there, and this will be a pleasant trip down memory lane. You alright mate? Yeah, I'm alright thanks. Subtitles are available on this video, so switch them on if you'd like a little bit of help understanding every single word that I say.

But now, without further ado, let's begin this walk and talk episode in London, and here we go. Hello everyone, yes, this is me walking and talking again. This time I'm in London, yep, and currently walking along the south bank of the River Thames.

This area is known as the South Bank, that's what this area is called. Just walked under Embankment Bridge. You can get lots of buskers here, that's a busker, a guy in this case playing the guitar in the street.

But you get different types of buskers here, singing, dancing, doing magic, this bus, there's a bus here, a big pink bus, not a red bus, they sell frozen yoghurt. Kids on a school trip, where are they from? Where are they all from? Are they from China? I'm trying to read the badges on their sweaters, I couldn't see where they were from. Here's a big merry-go-round, a merry-go-round, yes, for the kids, my daughter loves those things.

There's a van over there selling fish and chips, freshly hand-battered fish and chips out of a van. It's such a busy and vibrant place, the South Bank. It got kind of refurbished, when was it? Around the time of the millennium, a lot of this stuff got refurbished and redesigned, they added these green spaces here, they kind of repaved the embankment, refreshed the whole area with more shops and cafes and things, made it a really attractive place for people to come.

There's some sort of street performance going on here. What's he doing? Stop, stop, stop. Three people clapping, the rest of you go like this.

But now I give you the show, London, if you're ready, say yeah! Everybody together, not just the kids and the alcoholics, or the alcoholic kids. If you're ready for this, say yeah! Yeah! If you're happy, say yeah! British humour, right, alcoholic kids. It's just a joke, of course, listeners.

Here's the River Thames, big wide river, big old river. Well, all rivers are old, aren't they, really? And right up here in front of me is the London Eye, which is like a big observation wheel. I think it takes about 30 minutes to go all the way around it, and it goes really high and at the top you get a great view of the London skyline and beyond.

And on a clear day you can see really far and you can pick out all the different interesting buildings and monuments and things from up there, including of course the Houses of Parliament, Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, St Paul's Cathedral and other things. Now it's bound to be noisy, everyone. It's bound to be noisy.

Here's another busker. Some more street performers dressed up in their outfits. Big London Eye.

So yeah, I was just saying it's bound to be noisy this episode. There's not really anything I can do about that. If I'm going to visit these sort of popular places then there's going to be a lot of activity around.

Not just the sound of people talking around me, in English this time, not in French. And if I'm going through parts of the city there's bound to be the sounds of cars and buses driving past me.

This is what it's like in any big city, isn't it? It's always going to be noisy.

So I expect for some of you listening that might be a bit disorienting or just, I don't know how to put it really, just a bit unpleasant to listen to. I think that, as I said in the last one of these, I think that only affects certain people it seems who are particularly sensitive to that kind of noisy audio atmosphere. Other people find it immersive and makes it an interesting listening experience.

Wow, it's very crowded here. It's like school holidays, school holiday time. So lots of families are down here with their kids, lots of tourists.

Hello, this is Luke from the future just interrupting things here. I hope you're enjoying this walk through London. We've only just started in fact.

There's so much more to come, so many other things to see. I'm just interrupting myself here for two reasons. The first thing is that there is a full transcript available for this episode.

So if you would like to check anything that you're hearing, if you would like to see the written version, then go ahead, you can just download the transcript from the description of this episode. The link is in the description. The second thing is that in just a second, you're going to hear me talking about the Olympic Games and you'll hear me say, in Paris at the moment, the Olympics is happening or the Olympics is going to happen soon in Paris.

And you'll think to yourself, wait a minute, what's going on, Luke? That was last year, that was 2024 or that was two years ago or basically that was in the past, Luke. What's happening? Well, yes, I actually recorded this footage a year ago from the moment I speak. It was summer of 2024.

So that's why when you hear me talking about the Olympics, that should make sense. I actually recorded this a year ago and I've been sitting on this footage. I haven't literally been sitting on it.

That would be strange. But I've had this in my hard drive for ages and finally I've worked on it and produced this episode. But anyway, just so that you don't think that you're losing your mind or I'm losing my mind.

Yes, I know the Olympics happened in the past in Paris. So that's why, that explains that. Okay, on with the walking tour of London.

Here we go. It's quite funny, really, because at the moment in Paris, the Olympics is going on. Okay, sorry, one more interruption, because here you are, you're listening to this and you're learning English and therefore you're paying attention to every single word I'm saying and you're thinking, wait a minute, Luke, is it really the Olympics is? Surely it's the Olympics are, right? Because it's plural.

The Olympic Games are? Yes, I think so. Yes, the Olympics are. But I think that this is actually one of those cases where it's kind of acceptable, maybe just in my mind, to say the Olympics are, because for me, the Olympics is the name of an event, right? A specific singular event.

And so that's why I'm saying the Olympics is. It's a bit like when I say the Beatles, right? The Beatles is my favourite band, because although that's plural and there are four Beatles, or there were four Beatles, although that's plural, I'm thinking of the Beatles as a singular thing, as a band. So when I say the Olympics is, the Olympics is going to start, that's because in my mind, the Olympics is a singular event.

So yeah, although it's technically plural because it's the Olympic Games and that should be the Olympic Games are, you can see how actually in English, sometimes plural things can be considered a singular thing, right? Like my example of the Beatles, and in this case, the Olympics. So I'm not wrong, okay? There you go. So sometimes with English, it's not just a question of right or wrong.

It's just a question of whether you can explain your unconventional use of grammar, maybe. So there you go. The Olympics begin in Paris this coming Friday.

So it's just like the week or days before the Olympics. And everyone expected the city to be completely full of tourists and to be unbelievably crowded. All the Parisians were convinced that the place would get so crowded, you wouldn't be able to do anything.

But all the reports in the news say that Paris is empty, it's deserted. This is what the reports are saying, whether it's true or not, I don't know. But apparently it's deserted, like not enough tourists have come for the Olympics.

There's over a million unsold tickets. I bet it's not deserted. I bet during the Olympics, especially for the opening ceremony, I'm sure

around in parts of the city where the Olympic activities are happening, I'm sure it's going to be very crowded.

But it's just ironic that I'm walking through London and it's like incredibly crowded. Meanwhile, Paris is all deserted. And everyone expected the city to be so full of people, but it's not the case.

What's going on? Do you think people are not interested in the Olympics anymore? I think everyone's a bit sceptical now. Everyone's over it, right? The Olympics. Just recent years, people maybe see what's really going on.

Maybe, what am I saying, it's become a little bit jaded because of corruption and people just feel like it's all a way for the corporations to make loads of money and it's not really that profitable for most normal people. But still, the sporting events are great and the Paralympics is really cool. Like all of the different events, it's just really interesting to see the different sports that are featured in the Paralympics and the interesting ways in which people are able to do sports.

For example, like playing basketball when you're in a wheelchair or blind football or people doing athletics when they've perhaps got, what's the word for it, perhaps when they're using artificial limbs. You see people running with the kind of metal or carbon fibre legs and things. God, it's so crowded here, everyone.

I've picked the most crowded place to do this. All these people. It's a bit overwhelming.

Why did I choose to walk down the most touristy part of London? This is not a very good advert for the city. It's not normally as crowded as this. And this is a Tuesday afternoon in July, but it's peak tourist season at the moment.

But you can see what people come for. They come for these big monuments and these views. Like, is that too windy? Like the London Eye over there, Big River.

And then London, Westminster, the city of Westminster, which is a part of London. London itself is divided into different districts or cities. We're currently in Westminster.

And over towards the east, you've got the City of London, as it's called. Then you've got other parts of the city, like, for example, Kensington and Chelsea to the west. Hammersmith further down the river.

Southwark on the other side of the river down there. And so on and so forth. London's really just a collection of different towns all stuck together to form one big metropolis.

London, home of Danger Mouse. You can't really see very much right now except the backs of tourist heads and silly tourists walking in the cycle lane. They're in the cycle lane, the cyclists are coming, going, ding, ding, ding, get out of the way, silly tourists.

Someone's trying to have their romantic photograph taken in front of the Houses of Parliament. So I've got a feeling that this episode's not going to work very well as an audio episode, but who knows, maybe I'll be able to edit it together. Oh my goodness,

just in case I was worried about the loud noises in this episode, here's a guy playing the bagpipes with a Canadian flag.

Is this a Canadian bagpipe player? I'm not going to stop for long because I've got somewhere to be, I've got to make progress. I'm actually heading towards Marleybone train station. I don't know exactly how I'm going to make my way there because I'm quite far away from that.

But I wanted to try and visit some interesting parts of town to show you some of the sights of London while also making my way up to North West London to get my suitcase and then get on a train to where my parents live. There's the Houses of Parliament, this is where the House of Commons and the House of Lords are based. It's where the government, you know, have their debates and vote on laws and things.

And this is the Elizabeth Tower, it's called these days. And inside the Elizabeth Tower is Big Ben, which is actually a large bell that goes dong every hour. So it's actually the bell that's called Big Ben, as you will know if you're a long-term listener to this podcast, because I'm always telling you that.

Sorry, it's so crowded. I'm not sure this is, how is this going to work out as an episode? What does this look like? Is it, is it, how is it to watch this? It's probably better to watch this than it is to actually be walking along here because this is just kind of annoying. Having to walk through crowds of people, it's just so irritating.

I wanted to go and visit, I wanted to walk down Whitehall, which is like a major street where lots of government ministries are based. Oh my God, it's tourist hell. I hate crowds of people, I really do.

Keep talking, keep talking, Luke. It's always a good, good policy for doing a podcast, Luke, for doing your podcast. Just keep talking, OK? Just keep the words flowing.

As we walk down this road, it's a busy city, especially in July. Tons of tourists. I need to get off the beaten track, right? The beaten track, that means the places where everybody goes, like the way that everyone chooses to go is the beaten track.

So the phrase to get off the beaten track means to go sort of down the roads or on the routes that people don't normally take, right? So I'm walking down these major roads, going to the most touristy places, so of course there's going to be loads of people. But I need to get off the beaten track. But the thing is, if I get off the beaten track, I end up missing some of these highlights.

So you can look at these. This is the Cabinet War Rooms over here. It's a museum which shows the war rooms of Winston Churchill and his government from World War II.

They've been preserved, so you can visit them. There's the Cenotaph, which is one of London's most significant monuments. The Cenotaph is a monument to the people who died during the Great War, the First World War.

And I believe it also represents the people who died in World War II as well. I think originally it was for the people who died in World War II. That's a fire engine driving past.

Hopefully nothing too serious. So this whole street, as I said, is Whitehall. Now these buildings are government buildings.

This is where government offices are based, and different ministries. I'm not sure which ministry is based in this large building here. Which ministry is this? But these black gates here, there's a big crowd of people, because this is the entrance to Downing Street.

It's basically a small side street, but that's where the Prime Minister's house is. Number 10 Downing Street. Can we see it from here? You can't really see it from here.

It's just down there on the right. Oh my God. So many tourists.

The police guarding the entrance. It's down there on the right. Number 10 Downing Street, next door to it, number 11, which is where the Finance Minister lives, the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

So there you go. If you want to go and visit Keir Starmer, you know where he lives. Number 10 Downing Street.

OK, there's another monument here. This is a monument to the women of World War II. The women who not only gave their lives, but gave their service at home.

Working in factories, building weapons, ammunition, doing the work that the men couldn't do because they were off fighting. Let's just have a closer look at some of these large buildings. See if we can identify which ministries are based here.

In this particular section of Whitehall, as I said, this large row with all these large buildings, this is the Cabinet Office. Number 70 Whitehall, the Cabinet Office. This is where the Cabinet is based.

The Cabinets, that's basically the set of ministers, government ministers, who form the most important members of the government. For example, the Ministry for Education, the Home Office Ministry, the Foreign Office Ministry, and so on. So this group of ministers, selected by the Prime Minister, is like his main team that forms the core of the government.

We call that the Cabinet. Dover House, which is where the Secretary of State for Scotland is based, apparently. This thing here is apparently the Government Ministry for Tourist Merchandise Crap, where you can buy badges, royal guards with toy guns.

How nice. Let's keep going, because we're going to approach Horse Guards Parade. Coming up on the left, you're going to see some guys in old military uniform, sitting on horses.

These are the Horse Guards. I don't know how long the Horse Guards have been doing what they're doing. But this is a military unit based here.

And they are a horse unit, so they ride horses. And they basically guard this entrance towards Buckingham Palace. I'm going to walk through here.

I'm assuming I'm allowed. I mean, I am Luke from Luke's English Podcast, after all. If all these tourists are allowed in, then I don't see why I can't come in as well.

Bloody tourists. No, I don't mind. King's Mounted Bodyguards.

OK, so these are basically the King's Bodyguards. Mounted means that they are on horses. So I'm walking through Horse Guards Parade, I think it's called.

I'm not a tour guide, I'm just a bloke, right? So we're kind of approaching St James's Park, and Buckingham Palace is in that direction. We'll go and have a look at Buckingham Palace, if we can actually get to it, because often there are crowds in front of that as well. Another, what looks like another war memorial over there, with St James's Park in the background, which is a lovely, pleasant green space.

London is full of green spaces. It's an interesting spot, this, with these government ministries, these important institutions around me. Various statues.

Tourists, pigeons. Tourist pigeons, I don't think... Do you get tourist pigeons? Do you think that pigeons ever go on holiday? Like, coo-coo, where shall we go? Coo-coo-coo. Let's go to... Let's go to London.

And... No, probably not. Oh, dear, I'm not feeling that inspired this afternoon. What time is it? OK, it's nearly four o'clock.

Actually, I wanted to go now. See if I can find a bike. Cycle to Marleybone.

My phone is going to die. I don't think I can get a bike. Right, I'm going to abandon this episode.

I'm going to abandon this, I've decided, for various reasons. Reason number one, I'm not prepared enough with the right information. I need to prepare a document with key facts, and a clear route decided in advance, so that as I walk along the route, I can tell you the facts, right? That's one.

Second thing, my phone is going to die. It's going to run out of battery. And I need my phone to communicate with my mum and dad, so that they know when I'm going to arrive, and other things.

So I need to go to a shop and buy one of those battery chargers. And yeah, third thing, I need to get going. I need to get on a train to go and visit my parents.

So I don't know what I'm going to do with this episode. What shall I do with it? It would be a pity just to get rid of it. I don't know, maybe I'll just chuck it in as a bonus extra.

This is the Mall, right? This road, this big red, long red road, is basically the driveway for Buckingham Palace, which is over there, way up there in the distance. I don't know if you can see it, all the way up there, Buckingham Palace, and all the way down there,

Trafalgar Square. I guess I'll head towards... Well, I wanted to get a bike.

I wanted to find a Lime bike, a little rental bike. But I'm not sure if it's a good idea to rent one, if my phone's going to die, because if it dies while I'm on the bike, what does that mean? How do I end the rental? The rental will just go on forever. It'll cost me a fortune.

London is a big city, and it takes a long time to get from A to B, especially on foot. It's not like Paris. Paris is smaller, and so you can get on a bicycle.

You can get from one part of the city, quite far to another part, in a relatively short time. But it took me 20 minutes to get from the British Library, where I started, near St Pancras, down to the South Bank. In fact, it took me about 10 minutes just to go from Marylebone Station to the British Library.

I felt like they were right next to each other. In Paris, if I got on a bike and rode for 10 minutes, I'd feel like I'd be half the way across town. So it just gives you an idea of the different sizes.

And in London, everything takes longer. You end up doing a lot more walking. People end up being in a bit more of a hurry.

There's a bit more of a sense of urgency, because often people have to travel a little bit further. Here's an interesting statue. It's like a soldier with a rifle.

Is there a wounded man? Erected by the officers and men of the Royal Marines in memory of their comrades who were killed in

action or died of wounds or disease in South Africa and China, 1899 to 1900. Wow. South Africa and China.

South Africa, is that what's known as the Boer War? So many of those sorts of things here. OK, clearly this gate which leads into Trafalgar Square is being repaired right now, refurbished. So they've covered it.

They've covered it in this... ..this kind of awning, this covering. It's quite clever, the way they do this these days. Didn't used to be like that.

When a building was being refurbished, it would look like that. They would just cover it with really horrible-looking plastic covers. These days, with the really big monuments, they cover them with a cover that looks like the building itself, so it's kind of like... ..a little bit better.

But isn't it grand? I mean, I love being in central London. I love these grand buildings and these pubs. Look at this nice pub.

The Admiralty. What a nice-looking pub. Have a quick look.

You just walk through from one end to the other. It's like a nice pub, isn't it? Look at that. Wow, what a fantastic room.

Chandelier, lovely wooden tables and floor. Big wooden bar. It's like a naval theme to this one, with ships and telescopes and things, and all these nice English beers.

I'd like to stop and have one, but I don't have time. Look. Nice pub.

It's got that naval theme, because this is Trafalgar Square, which commemorates the Battle of Trafalgar, which is when the English fleet fought against Napoleon's fleet at the Battle of Trafalgar, as I said. The English fleet was led by Admiral Lord Nelson, whose statue is at the top of this big tower. And the English navy won that one, so we like to celebrate it.

It's a big, important battle that we won, so let's commemorate it with this fantastic square, with fountains and statues and big copper lions. Are they made of copper or bronze? I'm not sure. Bronze, I suppose.

Very grand it is. And then at the back, the National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery, full of priceless paintings and portraits. And it's free, you can just walk straight in.

I remember when England won the Ashes against Australia. That's a big series of cricket matches. In 2005, in those days I used to teach sort of freelance in London, and I'd be moving around from office to office to someone's home, teaching different one-to-one lessons.

And I remember I had an afternoon to kill. I'd taught in the morning, and I had a one-to-one at six o'clock or something. So I had five hours to kill.

And the Ashes, the cricket match was on TV, and I went to a pub and sat there and drank coffee all afternoon. I couldn't drink beer because I was teaching later on, and watched England win the

Ashes. And then this place was completely full of England cricket fans all celebrating.

It was the middle of summer, and they were all jumping in the fountains and marching in circles in the water. It was amazing. Trafalgar Square used to be completely full of pigeons, like literally just so many of them.

If you came here, if you had some food, they'd climb all over you. It was a sort of feature of Trafalgar Square back in the old days. Feed the birds, tuppence a bag, right? Mary Poppins.

But they were so unhygienic that they got rid of them all. I don't know how they did that. Probably best not to think about it.

More noise for you. Another busker somewhere. Tracy Chapman.

Ben Dixon. His name? Ben Dixon Music on Instagram. Here you go, Ben.

Ben Dixon Music on Instagram. There he is singing Tracy Chapman. Fast Cars, the name of the song, isn't it? I wonder if that's going to get picked up by YouTube's copyright infringement detection software.

Probably this video will end up getting demonetised. If that whole section of the video is silent, then you're going to know why. Deadpool versus Wolverine in cinemas.

July 25th. Will it be good? I hope so. I have to say, I quite like those funny Marvel movies.

I do quite enjoy them. Now, where am I actually going? Where am I actually going? I wanted to buy a battery pack for my phone. So, I want to go to the Apple Store or something.

Where's the nearest Apple Store? Covent Garden. Can I make it to Covent Garden? Covent Garden, and then I need to get on a train in Marleybone. I need to pick up my suitcase as well.

Oh, Lord, I'm going to be late. As I just continue to jaywalk here, meaning cross the street even when the lights are red. I'm a maverick.

What are you going to do? Some people are like, I can't believe you crossed the street when the light was red. It's all right. It's okay.

You know, I'm a rule breaker. I'm a maverick. It's just the way I live.

I live life on the edge. It's okay. It's all right.

It's not, that's a cultural thing. I think in some cultures, doing that is considered to be really dangerous and you don't do it. But in England, in France, people do cross the street even when there's no crossing.

You're allowed to do it, I think. Actually, I said that in one of the episodes in Paris. I said, oh, the law is that you can cross the street wherever you want.

And to be fair, someone wrote to me and said, actually, there is a law in Paris, which says you're supposed to cross at crossings, just so you know. All right. But the fact is, people tend to cross the street wherever and it's no big deal.

As long as you look both ways, as long as you're careful, it's totally fine. More pubs, there's so many pubs in London. I think there's 3,500 pubs in this city, I read.

I read that on the Eurostar this morning while I was like half preparing to do this. I didn't prepare enough because I slept. The reason being, I got up at seven o'clock this morning.

No, I got up at half past six. That half an hour, that half an hour is crucial. It's a crucial difference.

I got up at half past six to get the early train. And so I was a little bit sleepy. So I had a bit of sleepy time on the train, which is why I didn't quite prepare this walk and talk as well as I could have done.

But it looks like I'm still going. I'm still talking, still walking, still recording. It was touch and go earlier on whether I was actually going to use this.

I mean, who knows? Maybe I won't. If I review the footage and look back at it, maybe I'll see, oh God, no, that's terrible. Too noisy, too many tourists and didn't say anything of any particular substance.

Or maybe I'll look back at it and think, oh no, it's all right. It's quite a pleasant little stroll through some parts of London. So we're now in the Soho area.

Okay. What street is this? Bedford Street in Soho. Approaching Leicester Square.

Someone's left their bike like that. That's no good, is it? There we go. Better.

Because that was blocking the pavement, you see. Just trying to help out in the community. Covent Garden, okay.

So we are in the Covent Garden area, heading towards, hopefully heading towards the Apple store, Apple shop. I used to teach at a language school in Covent Garden as well. Memories.

Such sweet memories. Spending time in London town. Oh God.

I love London. I've spent many, many happy times in my life on these streets, wandering. And those days that I mentioned before when I used to teach one-to-one lessons, I didn't have a lot of money.

Didn't have a lot of spending money. I couldn't afford to you know, eat nice meals all the time and I was living on a budget, walking around, you know, just sitting on benches to rest and whatever. But I just, I got to know the city so well.

This is a church. I thought we'd have a look inside. Which church is it? Let's go in and have a look first.

Yes. Oh, the lovely smell of incense. Is that David Hasselhoff? I don't think it is.

Corpus Christi Catholic Church. There you go. A little oasis of calm and tranquilly in the heart of an otherwise very busy and bustling city centre.

There you go. I sound like a tour guide, don't I? I mean, in the book I sound like I could have written The Rough Guide to London. Why not? Are you interested in you know, Covent Garden is the bustling heart of Soho where shoppers eager to go on a spending spree have got a plethora of choices at their disposal.

But if you're keen for a bit of peace and quiet in the heart of your shopping extravaganza, why not visit Corpus Christi Catholic Church, an oasis of calm in an otherwise vibrant and lively commercial centre. Here we are, Covent Garden. Used to be an old market, used to be a flower and fruit and vegetable market.

These days it's just like shops and cafes and stuff. The Apple Store is on the other side of Covent Garden. London Transport Museum over there.

One of the better museums in London, you've got to pay for it. But it's really good, really interesting history of transport in London, including the history of the Underground, which is the oldest underground train network in the world. First ever underground train system that the Metropolitan Line in London don't remember exactly the date.

I think it's 18th century. I might be wrong. I'll have to fact check that.

Yes, the world's first underground railway line, called the Metropolitan Railway, was opened in London on the 10th of January 1863. It ran between Paddington and Farringdon Street. So, not the 18th century, but the 1800s, in fact 1863.

My path has been blocked by tourists. Was this you in the past? Have you ever been a part of a group of young tourists with red lanyards and waistcoats on, following a tour guide holding a yellow umbrella? Maybe that was you, just there. Imagine if you spotted yourself in this video.

By the way, I was in London on the 23rd of July. Wait a minute, that was me! If you see yourself in this episode, let me know. OK, so we've arrived at the Apple store.

Let's see if I can find a battery pack. And let's hope that there's some power in it as well. I don't know how this is going to go.

Just making this up as I go along. Is this open? No. OK.

An oasis of calm in an otherwise bustling commercial centre. Oh my God, look. Vision Pro.

No thanks. I'm not quite ready for that yet. Those look like hard drives.

Is this what I'm looking for? Aha! See? Power station. 50% charge in 30 minutes for iPhone. You know what? I'm going to get that.

Useful for the holiday as well, this summer. Right, look at this. I'm going to splash some cash here.

Now, if I can just get one of these Apple guys. C3PO. Oi, C3PO.

I need to buy some stuff. Normally, if you walk around a shop like this holding some merchandise, someone pounces on you because they're so ready to take your money. Hi.

I'd like to buy these, please. By the end of the table there are two of my colleagues there. Thanks.

Thank you. Hello. I'd like to buy these, please.

Yes. That's alright. No, I've got one.

Yeah. Thank you. Yes, please.

You can email it, yeah. Sure. Alright.

Do you want a bag? No, it's fine. Thanks very much. Bye.

Alright, mission accomplished. Now it's time to leave the shop before I get tempted to buy something else. But what would I buy? I mean, really, this Vision Pro thing? It's a sort of virtual reality headset.

Apparently it's amazing. But do I need that? No. I mean, it's apparently like a totally immersive way to watch films and surf the internet and stuff, but I don't need that.

It looks sad, doesn't it, to sit on your sofa with a headset strapped to you. I mean, it's just one step further towards the Matrix, isn't it? Eventually, in ten years, they'll be like, don't waste your time with an uncomfortable headset, which might lead to spinal bending. Just plug the Apple BrainPort straight into the back of your skull from £999.

You know, that'll be next. Right, I think we're going to wrap this up now, because now I've got my battery pack, completed my mission, I'm now going to make my way to Marleybone. Maybe I can get on a bike.

Just keep on trucking. I like riding the bikes in London. Oh, has my phone died? Yes.

Literally get my phone out and it just dies instantly. I think it's wise to just take the underground at this point. I can go from Covent Garden to... where can I go? If I need to get to Baker Street or Marleybone, I can walk from Baker Street.

Baker Street, home of Sherlock Holmes. 221B Baker Street. I think there's a little Sherlock Holmes museum there.

Not that Sherlock Holmes was a real person, of course, he was a fictional character. But such a popular character, that of course there's going to be some sort of little monument to Sherlock Holmes at that address, 221B Baker Street. I think it's like a Sherlock Holmes merchandise shop or a little Sherlock Holmes museum where I think they've got mock-ups of Sherlock Holmes' room.

And you can see a mannequin of Holmes smoking his pipe and discussing a case with Watson. I just love Sherlock Holmes stories so much. Which reminds me, I must record another one for this podcast.

Right. I've been trying to work out which story I should do next. I'm just trying to find the right story.

I need one that's not too long and also one that has the right kind of elements in it. But, to be honest, any of the short stories from the... there's three books of short stories that are the best ones. The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes and The Return of Sherlock Holmes.

Those three books, every story, brilliant. So I just need to pick one and do it. I will.

Oh God, even more. Where are these guys from? What do you reckon? Italian? Spanish? French? Shall I try and listen in? Spanish, I think. Right.

I need that tube map. Underground map. ... Excuse me.

Right. Let's have a look at this. We are here.

We need to be here. I should probably just walk to Piccadilly Circus and get on the Piccadilly line. I think I will do that.

Time to walk to Piccadilly Circus. This way. We're not over yet.

It's not over yet. We're not done yet. I'm going to walk along this road which is called Longacre.

I've walked down this road so many times. Like I said, I used to work just around the corner in Covent Garden at a language school. What are the chances that someone watching or listening to this was one of my students in that school in Covent Garden? Listeners, viewers, did you ever study English at the Mayfair School of English in Covent Garden? Did you have a fresh-faced English teacher called Luke? If you did, that might have been me.

But I'm not as fresh-faced anymore. But I'm still called Luke. Just keep going.

I wanted to do some shopping in London but I think I'm going to have to do that next Saturday when I come back. I'm going to spend the day in London again next Saturday before I go back to Paris. So maybe then I can pop into Uniqlo or whichever stores I want to look in.

Although, to be fair, Uniqlo is just the same everywhere, isn't it? Right? They've got Uniqlo in Paris. They've got several Uniqlo's just the same stuff. So I don't know why I have to do my shopping in London.

But, you know, like I said before, I'm on my own and I sort of don't have to follow my wife and kids around because I'm not accompanied by them. I feel a sense of freedom, liberty to just do whatever I want. So I could do some shopping but no, now's not the time because I'm already about an hour late, I think.

I probably won't get on a train. I'll probably arrive at my parents at least an hour later than I said I would. I hope they don't mind.

But I need to get onto the Bakerloo line at Piccadilly Circus and find my way to Marleybone. Visit that hotel where my suitcase is being kept. I'm not staying in a hotel.

I just left my suitcase at a hotel. They have a service there. They'll hold onto your suitcase for the day.

I need to get my suitcase, get on a train and Bob's your uncle which is an expression which just means like, and there you go. And that is that. So this is, we're just approaching Leicester Square, another incredibly touristy spot.

Just taking you through the most crowded parts of the city today. More merchandise, London buses and Big Bens and telephone boxes. All the stuff.

All the touristy knickknacks. Souvenirs. This is Leicester Square Underground Station.

Nice building. I like these red tiles on the front. Oh look, it's the Aberdeen Angus Steakhouse.

These restaurants have been here for decades. I've never eaten in one of them and I never will. Probably.

They're all over the city, those Angus Steakhouses. Scottish beef, isn't it? I think, Angus Steakhouse, yeah. Leicester Square.

The entrance to Leicester Square. Which is where all the big movie premieres take place. Trying not to get run down by a black taxi.

Look at me. Look at Maverick Thompson crossing the lights when the Red Man is lit. The Red Man was lit, man! Um... Yeah, look at the tourist hell that is Leicester Square.

To be honest, when people ask me, for example, my students or friends of mine are going to go and visit London and they ask me for my advice on what they should do here, I usually say, you know what? Avoid the touristy spots. Avoid Leicester Square. Avoid Oxford Circus.

Avoid Oxford Street. Piccadilly Circus. No, just avoid them.

It's a nightmare. It's horrible. It's just like, tourists everywhere, the smell of ketchup in the air.

All the worst food. You know, like people they come back from a trip to England and they're like, yeah, it was nice and everything but the food, ugh. I thought, well yeah, of course.

We went to Leicester Square. What did you expect from Pizza Italia? From Bella Italia in Leicester Square? More crowds of people. Cinemas.

Loads of cinemas here. Cinemas and casinos. Another busker singing Coldplay.

Who's this? Tumascurota, I think his name was. So, Leicester Square used to be a much seedier place I mean, the sort of place

in the 1960s or 70s that you would come and then, you know, there would be various dodgy people around. It's the sort of place where drug dealers would congregate in the corner and the buildings nearby may have housed prostitutes and illegal gambling venues.

Dodgy casinos and gangsters. It's the sort of place that you would go if you wanted to buy some hash and some amphetamines. You'd go to Leicester Square.

These days, Lego store, M&M's store, Greg's, Pret a Manger. What do you want, mate? What do you want? Some yellow M&M's? Yeah, man. M&M's store.

Is that the M&M's store? Are these M's or E's? Put them on the side. They're E's, aren't they? There's loads of Swiss clocks donated by the Swiss. Thanks, Switzerland, for the clock.

Little monument there to Switzerland. They generously donated some of their clocks to us. Nice one, guys.

Oh, my God. Right. Here we go.

Another very touristy spot as I cross the road where the red man is lit. More souvenir shopping to be done. Another little casino that I've never been inside.

No thanks. A whole shop devoted to Union Jack posters and London Underground T-shirts and that sort of thing. This looks like a kind of vaguely Harry Potter-themed shop, although they can't actually use the words Harry Potter, because that's probably under copyright law.

They're not allowed to, but it's called Wizards & Witches and it's got a vaguely Harry Potter feel to it, including a train at what looks like maybe King's Cross Station. It's not an official Harry Potter store, just like similar. They probably make loads of money from tourists looking for that sweet, sweet Harry Potter merchandise.

Nice. Some of that Harry Potter dollar. Bubble tea.

Platinum lace. That's a strip club. An interesting mix of things, like gambling, strip clubs and candy shops for kids.

What on earth? But it's all just a bit of fun, isn't it? It's all good. Just in case you didn't have enough souvenirs of London, there's a whole shop full of them. More souvenirs.

Just in case you couldn't remember whether you visited London. Did we ever visit London? I don't know. I can't remember.

You didn't buy a little mini bus, that's why. Damn it, if we'd bought a little red bus, we would have remembered the whole experience. So, I'm now heading into Piccadilly Circus Station.

Is the battery still running? Yeah, it is still recording. Unbelievably. As we head down into the underground.

Okay. Sad sight, there's a guy sleeping on the floor. That's sad.

Homeless guy. I mean, I didn't give them any money. I could have done, maybe.

I don't actually have any cash on me. I haven't got pounds sterling. Honestly, sometimes I give money to homeless people, sometimes I don't.

You know, sometimes you think by giving money to homeless people, it sort of somehow makes being homeless a possibility. You kind of think really there should be places for these people to go, you know. Like, the government should be sponsoring hospices and stuff, and there should be programmes to deal with this stuff.

By giving people money directly in the street, they perhaps might not spend it wisely. They're just going to buy crack with it. Although, to be fair, if you are addicted to crack, then you really do want some.

And if someone gave you some money to get some, it would certainly make you feel a lot better for a while. Anyway, here we go. Stand on the right.

Let people pass on the left. Very important principles of how to use the London Underground. Hold the handrail, stand on the right.

And don't congregate in the corridors, because you're going to hold up the entire city. He heard me. He heard me, listeners.

Bakerloo line. Northbound. Wait a minute.

Bakerloo line. Yes. We need to go here.

Northbound, Bakerloo line, please. I'm going to go down the escalator again. Another escalator.

Deep into the bowels of London. I like these iconic designs, though, for the London Underground. I like the round, curved walls.

This is why it's called the Tube. Because all the tunnels look sort of round. We saw David Beckham.

Did you see David Beckham on the poster? Go on, Max. Here we go. Crowded Piccadilly line.

Take my rucksack off. All right. So, that's the end of this video.

Because now I need to focus on getting myself to the station. Getting on a train to the Midlands. So, yeah.

That's the end of this trip to London today. Thanks for joining me. Hope you enjoyed it.

It's been very crowded. But I like the energy of London. All right, everyone.

Catch you next time. Sherlock Holmes. There he is, the man himself.

This statue, commissioned by the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, was sponsored by Abbey National PLC, a bank, to commemorate its 150th anniversary in 1999. All right, Sherlock. There you go.

Right, that really is the end now. Pigeons. Pigeons everywhere.

Oh, just one more thing. Let's have a little look. Bloody pigeons.

Please do not feed the pigeons. They are a health hazard and a nuisance. Bloody pigeons.

Bloody health hazard and a nuisance, aren't they? Yeah, let's just round them all up, get rid of them. That's what I say. I don't really mean that, see? Speaking in the voice of a different character there.

Uh-huh. All right. So, thank you very much for joining me on this trip through London.

I hope that you enjoyed spending the time with me. Leave your comments in the comments section. Get involved.

Tell us what you thought of this episode. Did you spot anything interesting as I was walking along? Have you ever been to London? If you have been to London, tell us about it. What were some of your favourite things? Did anything happen to you when you visited London? What was it like for you? Did watching this video bring back any memories? Did you go to London as a tourist, as a student? Did you live there? In fact, do you still live there? Did you appear in this video accidentally? If that's you, get in touch.

Sorry if you didn't actually want to be included in the video but you're famous now. Okay, you are now famous. You can leave your Instagram in the comments section if you want more publicity.

Feel free. Okay? Everyone, don't forget to listen to the audio version of this episode. I say the audio version of this episode.

I mean the episode of the audio podcast which has been published at the same time as this video. It's totally different to this but it is about London and as I said at the beginning, the concept for the audio version of the podcast today is that you can listen to recordings of some of my friends and family talking about what they like to do when they're in London. So some of their favourite things.

So if you'd like to hear what Londoners like to do in their city, if you want to get some really good bits of advice if you're visiting the city and there are things that you'd like to do, things you'd like to see and you'd like to know what it's like for the people who actually live there or have lived there, then listen to the audio version of this episode. And you'll find that wherever you get your podcasts, just search for Luke's English Podcast. Also, there's a link in the description with some podcast links so you can subscribe to Luke's English Podcast wherever you get your podcasts.

Whether it's Apple Podcasts or Pocket Casts or Spotify, whatever you want, yes, you'll find links in the description. The music in this episode was all made by my brother James and if you'd like to hear more of his stuff you'll find a link in the description for his Bandcamp page. Most of the time he makes techno, ambient techno music but he has some side projects that sound a bit more like the music in this video.

Anyway, you'll find links in the description. Thank you everyone for watching this episode and I will speak to you again on the podcast

in some form or other. Okay, let us know your thoughts in the comments section.

But for now it's just time to say goodbye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye.