

## A Life of Luxury

“Whoever said money can’t buy happiness didn’t know where to shop.”  
— Gertrude Stein

### Warm up

- What’s the most ridiculous or unnecessary thing you’ve ever seen a rich person buy?
- Do you think money changes people or does it just reveal who they really are?
- Is being a billionaire still impressive or is it becoming socially unacceptable?
- Would you rather have:
  - \$100 million and a normal life
  - \$5 billion but with constant security guards and press attention?
- If you had the power to redistribute wealth, what *simple rule* would you create? (e.g., “no one can earn more than 50× their lowest-paid employee.”)



1. You just became a billionaire overnight. What’s on your “zero-guilt shopping list”?  
Choose 3 items from below (or add new ones), the more outrageous, the better.



Private jet



Super yacht



Private chef



Space tourism



Villa



Sports team

## Talking About Pros & Cons

### Giving Advantages

One advantage of...is... → *One advantage of flying private is saving time.*

A benefit is... → *A benefit is not having to wait in airport lines.*

The biggest pro is... → *The biggest pro is flexibility; you can fly whenever you want.*

### Giving Disadvantages

However, the downside is... → *However, the downside is the astronomical cost.*

A major problem is... → *A major problem is the emissions per passenger.*

The biggest con is... → *The biggest con is the environmental impact.*

### Cause & Effect

Due to... → *Due to the low number of passengers, private jets emit more CO<sub>2</sub>.*

so... → *Fuel is three times more expensive, so most airlines don't use SAF.*

as a result... → *Only 1% of people fly private, but as a result they cause almost half of aviation emissions.*



**2. Work in pairs or small groups. Talk about the good and bad sides of each idea. Use the phrases above to explain your reasons.**

“Luxury travel should be taxed heavily to protect the environment. “

“There should be a maximum wealth limit, just like there is a minimum wage.”

“If you can afford a private jet, you should be allowed to use it.”

“There should be a global limit on how many flights a person can take each year.”

“Ultra-rich people should not be allowed to buy scarce cultural items (e.g., T. Rex skeletons).”

“Billionaires should not be allowed to run for political office.”

## Match the Item to the Correct Price

\$150	\$4000	\$5,000	\$5,300	\$10,000	\$18,000
\$25,000	\$28,000	\$115,000	\$380,000	\$1,800,000	\$31,800,000

	ITEM	PRICE
a.	 <u>A lock of Elvis Presley's hair</u> : Collected by his personal barber and kept in a sealed jar for decades. Sold at auction in 2002 to a private collector.	
b.	 <u>Andy Warhol's medicine cabinet</u> : The actual bathroom cabinet from his NYC apartment, still containing his pills, plasters, and vitamins. Sold as "art."	
c.	  <u>The Sugar Factory 24K Gold Monster Burger (Las Vegas)</u> : Wagyu beef, truffle cheese, gold-dusted fries, and a gold milkshake, all covered in edible 24-carat gold.	
d.	  <u>FleurBurger (Las Vegas)</u> : Kobe beef, foie gras, truffle sauce, served with rare wine at a luxury restaurant.	
e.	  <u>Louis Vuitton Jenga Set</u> : A classic wooden block game... except every block is wrapped in LV leather and stored in a designer trunk.	
f.	  <u>Hermès Diamond Birkin Bag</u> : Crocodile leather handbag with 10+ carats of diamonds on white gold hardware, owned by celebrities & investors.	
g.	 <u>A full T. Rex skeleton ("Stan")</u> : 39-foot dinosaur fossil, 67 million years old, bought by a private buyer for display.	
h.	  <u>24-karat gold PlayStation 5</u> : A working PS5 completely plated in real gold, sold by a luxury tech brand – limited edition.	
i.	  <u>Kanye West's used Nike Air Yeezy sneakers</u> : Worn on stage, then resold at auction, one of the most expensive pairs of shoes ever sold.	
j.	  <u>Salvatore Garau's Invisible Sculpture ("Io Sono")</u> : A "sculpture" with no physical object, only empty space. Sold with a certificate and instructions to display it in a 5x5 foot area.	
k.	  <u>Grilled Cheese with the Virgin Mary Image</u> : A 10-year-old grilled cheese sandwich said to show the Virgin Mary's face. Never molded, sold online as a "miracle snack".	
l.	  <u>Scarlett Johansson's Used Tissue</u> : A tissue she blew her nose into on live TV. Sold on eBay with the tissue, bag, and photo for proof.	



### 3. Discuss in pairs or small groups.

- Which item shocked you the most? Why?
- Which one (if any) do you secretly *kind of* want?
- At what point does a purchase stop being “luxury” and start becoming “ridiculous”?
- Why do you think people pay huge amounts for things like celebrity hair or invisible art?
- Who do you think is more responsible for these extreme prices: the people selling the items or the people buying them? Why?
- Are these purchases a sign of wealth, boredom, or status addiction?
- If you had unlimited money, do you think *you* would stay sensible – or eventually buy crazy things too?



### 4. Match these words to their definitions. You will use these words in this worksheet and hear them at the end of the lesson in a short video.

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| a. jet setter     | 1. Gases released into the air, especially CO <sub>2</sub>  |
| b. emissions      | 2. A large building where airplanes are stored and repaired |
| c. hangar         | 3. Extremely high, unbelievably large                       |
| d. astronomical   | 4. To balance or reduce a negative effect.                  |
| e. to offset      | 5. A person who travels often to luxury places              |
| f. discrepancy    | 6. A person who travels by plane very often                 |
| g. frequent flyer | 7. A noticeable difference between two things               |



5. Fill in the gaps with the correct vocab from exercise 2.

- a. The cost of flying a private jet is so ..... that even millionaires sometimes think twice.
- b. Some celebrities try to ..... their carbon footprint by donating to tree-planting projects.
- c. A private plane needs its own ....., which can cost more per year than most people's houses.
- d. There's a huge ..... between how much pollution rich travellers create and how much ordinary people create.
- e. My cousin is such a ..... . She flies somewhere new with her rich husband almost every weekend!
- f. Private jets create far more CO<sub>2</sub> ..... per passenger than commercial flights.
- g. Many ..... earn so many air miles that they never have to pay for upgrades anymore.



6. You're about to watch a TED Talk about private jets, the ultra-rich, and climate impact. Before watching discuss the questions below in pairs or small groups.

- What do you *expect* the speaker will say about them? Will it be positive or negative? Why?
- Who do you think uses private jets the most?
- What do you think is the biggest problem with them: cost? environment? inequality?
- Do you think private jets will ever be banned?



7. Watch the TED Talk ['How much does it cost to fly private?'](#)<sup>1</sup> and answer the questions below.

- a. How many private jet flights did one celebrity take in a single year? .....
- b. What's the price per hour for a private jet in the U.S.? .....
- c. How much does a new private jet cost? .....
- d. How many times more CO<sub>2</sub> does a private jet emit per passenger compared to commercial? .....
- e. What % of flyers cause almost half of aviation emissions? .....
- f. What is SAF made from? .....
- g. Why don't airlines use it widely yet? .....
- h. What role could wealthy private jet users play in changing aviation fuel?  
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOBjtotp-Gw>