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Jiaying

大家好，欢迎收听 BBC 英语教学的“你问我答”节目。和我一起主持这期节目的还有我的同事 Beth。

Beth

Hi, everyone!

Jiaying

本期节目要回答听众 Jack 的问题，问题是：

Question

你好！我是 Jack。“Avoid、avert、prevent”和“refrain”似乎都有“避免”的意思，请问它们的用法都一样吗？

Jiaying

谢谢听众 Jack 发来的问题。Beth，这四个词的含义是不是很相似呢？

Beth

Yes, so to answer Jack's question, 'avoid', 'avert', 'refrain' and 'prevent' have related meanings and uses. They can all be used to talk about 'stopping a bad outcome'. However, there are some differences.

Let's first look at 'avoid'. 'Avoid' means 'miss' or 'stay away from someone or something negative'. It's often used for situations that are in progress, but not always. Let's hear some examples.

Examples

I crossed the road to avoid talking to Jonathan. We argued last week.

（我为了不和乔纳森说话走到了马路的另一边。我们上礼拜吵架了。）

Having an open conversation is a good way to avoid any misunderstandings.

(开诚布公地交谈是避免误会的好方法。)

Jiaying

所以，动词“avoid”的意思是“远离、躲避某人或避免坏事”，常用来谈论“避免一个将要发生的负面事情”，但并不总是如此。那“avert”该怎么用呢？

Beth

'Avert' is quite formal. It means 'stop something bad from happening'. And it's most commonly used when talking about very serious issues, such as catastrophes and disasters. Here are some examples:

Examples

The company tried to raise funds from investors to avert financial collapse.

(这家公司试图从投资者那里筹集资金，以避免陷入财务危机。)

People around the world are working together to try to avert a climate disaster.

(世界各地的人们都在齐心协力、努力避免气候灾难。)

Jiaying

所以，就如刚刚 Beth 讲到的，在谈论“避免(灾难)”等非常严肃的问题时，最常用“avert”。那么，动词“prevent”该怎么用呢？

Beth

'Prevent' can be used to talk about stopping both bad and good things happening. It's often used to talk about something before it has started, but not always.

Jiaying

That's interesting. 所以，动词“prevent”的意思是“防止某件事情发生”，可以用来谈论“防止好事或坏事的发生”。另外，“prevent”常强调“预防一件还没有发生的事情”。我们通过两个例句来巩固动词“prevent”的用法。

Examples

My injury prevented me from going on holiday.

(我的伤让我不能去度假。)

It's good to re-use plastic bags to prevent too much waste.

(重复使用塑料袋可以防止过多浪费。)

Jiaying

除了表示“防止、预防某事发生”以外，动词“prevent”还有其它的用法吗？

Beth

Yes. 'Prevent' can be used to say 'stop someone from doing something', usually with 'from'. None of the other words are used in this way. For example:

Examples

You need to prevent your child from kicking the seat in front of them while in flight.
(你得阻止你的孩子在飞机飞行期间乱踢前面的座位。)

His fear of social situations prevented him from going to the party.
(他对社交场合的恐惧使他不敢参加这次聚会。)

Jiaying

在上面的例句中，动词“prevent”都用来表示“阻止某人做某事”：“prevent someone from doing something”。

除了“prevent”以外，动词“refrain”也可以用来描述人的动作，对吗？

Beth

Yes. But, unlike 'prevent', we don't use it to talk about stopping other people. We use 'refrain' to mean 'stop ourselves from doing something', often to stop a negative outcome. 'Refrain' is also quite formal.

Jiaying

这样看来，“refrain”的意思是“克制，避免”，强调“某人阻止自己做某事 refrain from doing something”，从而“防止产生负面的结果”。“Refrain”是一个较正式的词。请听两个例句。

Examples

I refrain from eating a lot of chocolate, so I don't gain weight.
(我克制自己不吃很多巧克力，以免长胖。)

Please refrain from speaking too loudly during the film.
(请勿在电影放映期间大声说话。)

Jiaying

来总结一下：“avoid、avert、prevent”可以用来表示“阻止负面结果的发生”。其中，动词“avoid”指“远离、躲避某人，避免糟糕的情况”。“Avert”较正式，用来谈论“避免灾难等非常严肃的问题”。“Prevent”有“防止事情发生”的意思，也可以用在“prevent someone from doing something”的结构中，表示“阻止某人做某事”。动词“refrain”的意思是“克制自己不去做某事”。

Beth

Thank you for your question, Jack.

Jiaying

如果你在英语学习中遇到了难题，欢迎通过微博向我们提问。我们的微博账号是“BBC 英语教学”。你也可以发邮件给我们，邮箱地址是：questions.chinaelt@bbc.co.uk 感谢收听，再见。

Beth

Bye!