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Feifei: Hello 大家好, 欢迎收听《地道英语》。我是冯菲菲。

Neil: (*Sounding distracted*) Yeah, Hi, I'm err, Neil.

Feifei: Neil, what are you doing? Can we record this programme please?

Neil: Yes, sure, just a second. (*Talking to himself*) I still need to call the bank, turn off mobile data roaming, finish this script, buy mosquito repellent...

Feifei: 你自言自语说什么呢? We need to record this programme!

Neil: Yes, I know, just a minute. (*Carrying on talking to himself*) Need to pick up the Euros, check-in, pack the bag...

Feifei: Neil! What on earth are you talking about?

Neil: Sorry Feifei. I'm trying to sort out some bits and bobs before I go on holiday tomorrow.

Feifei: Bits and bobs? What has Bob done? 奇怪了, Bob 这个人挺好的, 怎么招惹你了? Why do you need to sort out Bob before you go on holiday?

Neil: No, no. I don't mean I need to sort out 'Bob'. The word 'Bob' here is not a person.

Feifei: It's not a person? 那 'bits and bobs' 在这里到底是什么意思呢?

Neil: In English, we use 'bits and bobs' to mean small things, or many different little types of jobs.

Feifei: 那也就是说你在去度假前还有很多零零碎碎地事儿要处理, 我明白了。原来 bits and bobs 这个表达常用来指零碎的小东西或许多不同的乱七八糟的杂事儿。

Neil: Yes. Now let's hear some examples.

Examples

A: *What are you doing tomorrow?*

B: *Nothing special, just a few bits and bobs.*

Mum: *Alex, can you tidy up all your bits and bobs?*

Son: *OK.*

A: *Have you been to the shop round the corner?*

B: *No, I haven't. Is it good?*

A: *Aw, it's great – it sells all sorts of interesting bits and bobs.*

Neil: Do remember 'bits and bobs' is an informal saying so we wouldn't use it in a formal situation.

Feifei: 注意 bits and bobs 是一个非正式的日常口语表达，通常在正式场合还应该避免使用。
Neil, what about the phrase 'bits and pieces'? Is it the same as 'bits and bobs'?

Neil: Yes, 'bits and pieces' is another informal way of saying 'lots of small things'.

Feifei: Bits and pieces 也是一个非正式的表达，它的意思、用法和 bits and bobs 完全相同。
Thank you, very helpful, Neil! (*Panicking*) Oh no, it's 7 o'clock. I need to go!

Neil: But we need to finish recording the programme...

Feifei: You can finish it Neil. I have to get all the bits and bobs for the party tonight before the shops close! Bye...

Neil: Err, OK. Well, maybe we can just finish it tomorrow? (*Talking to himself again*)
I have got the visa, still need buy travel insurance and a guidebook. Ooh, must remember to ring my mum...