

How do they do that?

Have you ever come across anything that someone has done that has made you wonder how on earth they had managed to do it? I've often wondered about how on earth window washers manage to clean the windows of high rise buildings, or how traffic controllers in airports manage to organize flights into and out of the airports so that all of the planes land and take off safely. There are jobs out there that we sometimes don't even realize exist, and the tasks involved in that job are either difficult or unusual. I haven't really got a stomach for heights, so I am always impressed when I see a job that has been done way up high somewhere, where most people would choose not to go. The other day when we were walking around Leavenworth, my husband suddenly said, "Gees, look at that. How did they do that?" He pointed to christmas lights that had been wound around tree branches in the central high street area. The trees were literally covered all the way up to the top of the branches. Now, this might not sound like much, but you have to remember that Leavenworth is a huge tourist attraction, especially around Christmas time. There is a special lighting festival that is repeated a few times. The bavarian style buildings are beautifully decorated with lights, and the trees, which measure at least fifty feet, are also covered. I'm talking about every branch, from the bottom to the top. So, how do they do that? And, who are the they? They must be people who don't mind climbing up extremely tall ladders, up to the tree tops, or perhaps, hanging from a crane. Do they do this every year, or are the lights kept up all year long? I wonder how much they get paid. I would certainly not be a good candidate for that kind of job. I can just see me the first day of work, half way up, clinging hold of the ladder for dear life, crying for mama. I wouldn't be a useful employee. The trees would be beautifully decorated for the first six feet, but that would be it; I couldn't go any further.

Grammar notes.

Common expressions: how on earth did you?, clinging hold of ... for dear life, to have a stomach for...

1. How on earth did you manage to lose your wallet twice in the same day?

OR How on earth did they manage to stay alive at sea for a month with no supplies?

2. They found the man clinging hold of the cliff edge for dear life.

OR She was nervous about losing her passport, and clung hold of it for dear life.

3. I don't have a stomach for roller coasters; they don't suit me at all.

OR I can't stomach musicals; they make me nervous and irritated.

