

# 25 Advanced English Grammar Test Practice Questions, Answers & Explanations

In this lesson, you'll challenge yourself with advanced grammar questions while refining your skills to communicate more effectively. From creating mixed conditionals to crafting polite and professional requests, we'll tackle tricky structures and uncover subtle nuances in language. You'll also learn how to navigate formal writing and use advanced grammar naturally in conversations. By the end of this lesson, you'll feel more confident applying these high-level skills in both social and professional scenarios.

## ■ Question 1: Conditionals

What word can replace 'if' in this sentence to make it sound more formal?

**If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.**

The answer is '**should**'.

- "**Should** you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me."

We can use 'should' in place of 'if' in **first conditional sentences** to increase the formality of the sentence. We tend to use it more when writing than speaking.

In the **second conditional**, we could replace 'if' with more formal alternatives such as the structure '**were + subject + to-infinitive**' to convey the same meaning while elevating the formality of the sentence. Here's how it could work:

- "**Were you** to require any further information, I would kindly ask you to contact me."



## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

## Question 2: Conditionals

What two words can be added to this sentence to make the situation less likely?

If you \_\_\_\_\_ speak to Colin, tell him I loved his presentation.

The missing words are '**happen to**'.

- "If you **happen to** speak to Colin, tell him I loved his presentation."

If we use the regular conditional 'If you speak to Colin, tell him I loved his presentation', we think it's likely the person will speak to Colin. By adding '**happen to**' in the if clause, the speaker communicates that **the situation is quite unlikely to happen**. It's like saying -

- "If by chance you speak to Colin."

The phrase '**were to**' works here too - it also makes the event less likely and is a more formal structure.

We can add '**should**' here to convey the same meaning. It can also replace '**happen to**' completely. When used to make a request, as in the example, it also serves to make the request more polite. Here's another example:

- "If you **should** happen to see any safety hazards in the warehouse, please report them to the safety officer immediately."



So, we can say:

- “If you **happen to** speak to Colin...” ✓
- “If you **were** you to speak to Colin...” ✓
- “If you **should happen to** speak to Colin...” ✓
- “If you **should** speak to Colin...” ✓

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

## ■ Question 3: Conditionals

What word can we add to this conditional structure to make a polite request?

If you \_\_\_\_\_ take a seat, I'll let Miss Williams know you're here.

The missing word can be '**will**' or '**would**'.

- “If you **will/would** take a seat, I'll let Miss Williams know you're here.”

Here the use of 'will' or 'would' makes the request sound more polite. You'll often hear the phrases '**If you would kindly...**' or '**If you would be so kind as to...**'

Can you think of a way to finish those two phrases? Here are my examples:

- “**If you would kindly** complete the questionnaire, we'd appreciate it very much.”



- “**If you would be so kind as to** assist with the onboarding of your replacement, that’d be very helpful.”

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

## ■ Question 4: Conditionals

Complete the sentence with the verbs in brackets.

If you \_\_\_\_\_ (follow) the instructions, we \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (not have) this conversation now.

This mixed conditional sentence talks about a hypothetical past with a present result. The correct sentence should be -

past perfect = hypothetical past

hypothetical present

- “If you **had followed** the instructions, we **would not be having** this conversation now.”

Let’s break this sentence down. In the first part, we have **If + past perfect**. This describes the event that **did or did not happen in the past**.

- “**If you’d followed the instructions**” means you did not follow the instructions.

The second part of the sentence describes the result of this hypothetical past: “**we wouldn’t be having this conversation now**”. This result is hypothetical as we are having this conversation now. The structure is **would/wouldn’t + base verb** or sometimes **be + -ing verb** for an action happening now.

Mixed conditionals like this can take a bit of getting used to! Try writing some of your own examples with this structure to help you gain confidence.

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

## ■ Question 5: Expressing Disapproval

What word can we add to this sentence to show that the speaker disapproves of Stuart's behaviour?

**Well, if Stuart \_\_\_\_\_ leave tasks until the last minute, it's no surprise that he keeps missing deadlines.**

That's right - '**will**'.

- “Well, if Stuart **will** leave tasks until the last minute, it's no surprise that he keeps missing deadlines.”

**Will** isn't just used to talk about the future! We can use 'will' for many other reasons, including to express our disapproval of someone's repeated actions or behaviour. We normally stress the word 'will' in these sentences. Here's another example -

- “He **will** insist on micromanaging every detail.”

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space on the next page.



## ■ Question 6: Embedded Questions

Which one of these sentences is correct?

- a. I'm not sure where is the meeting.
- b. I'm not sure where the meeting is.

The correct answer is **b) I'm not sure where the meeting is.**

This is what's called an **embedded question**. This structure can be a little confusing as embedded questions follow the typical **subject + verb order** for statements.

- I'm not sure where **the meeting** (the subject) **is** (the verb).

I know many learners sometimes automatically switch to the question order when they say or write a word like **where**, **who**, **when** and so on. But these embedded questions aren't technically questions, so we put the subject first and then the verb. Here are a couple more examples.

- "I don't know how **the customer feels**."
- "I've forgotten what **my password is**."

### Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.



## ■ Question 7: It's time...

How can we complete this sentence?

**It's time we \_\_\_\_\_ inequality in the workplace.**

- a. address
- b. addressed
- c. will address

The correct answer is **b) addressed**.

- “It's time we **addressed** inequality in the workplace.”

We use the expression ‘**It's time**’ + **past verb form** to talk about the present. ‘It's time we addressed inequality in the workplace’ means I think we should do this now. We often use it to say that we think something should have been done sooner. We should have started addressing workplace inequality sooner, maybe even a long time ago, so I think we should start doing this as soon as possible.

We can add ‘**about**’ or ‘**high**’ to the phrase to make a recommendation or suggestion stronger or more urgent, for example -

- “**It's high time we finalised** the deal before a competitor beats us to it.”
- “**It's about time you handed in** your notice.” (You should have done this earlier - now it's becoming more urgent.)

### Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## ■ Question 8: Preferences

What word can replace ‘rather’ in this sentence?

I’d **rather** work from home on Fridays than go into the office.

The correct answer is ‘**sooner**’.

- “I’d **sooner** work from home on Fridays than go into the office.”

We can use the expression ‘**would sooner do something than something else**’ with the same meaning as ‘**would prefer to do**’ or ‘**would rather do**’. For example -

- “I’d **sooner walk away from** the negotiation **than agree** to unfavourable terms.”

Or

- “I’d **sooner reschedule** the client call **than rush through** it unprepared.”

Notice how we need the **bare infinitive** - the infinitive without to for both verbs. This is a great advanced structure to use when you want to talk about preferences and priorities.

### Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## ■ Question 9: Modals of Probability

Which word increases the probability of the statement being true?



He could/may/might \_\_\_\_\_ be promoted this year.

- a. likely
- b. well
- c. possibly
- d. definitely

The correct answer is **b) well**.

We use '**well**' after the modals **could**, **may** and **might** to show we think there is a strong possibility of something happening. Want to make it even stronger? Just add '**very**' -

- "He **may very well** be promoted this year."

### Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

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## ■ Question 10: Criticism

Which one of these sentences conveys criticism of the other person's behaviour?

- a. You **must** have told me you were going to be late.
- b. You **might** have told me you were going to be late.
- c. You **may** have told me you were going to be late.



The correct answer is **b) You might have told me you were going to be late.**

We can use the structure '**might have**' + **past participle** to express our disapproval and criticism of someone's actions or behaviour. Intonation and tone of voice are important here as this structure is also used for past possibilities. We cannot use **must** or **may** to express criticism like this.

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

## ■ Question 11: didn't need to/needn't have

What's the difference in meaning between these two sentences?

- a. Lucinda **didn't need to submit** the report today.
- b. Lucinda **needn't have submitted** the report today.

Do you need a clue? Ok, in which sentence did Lucinda definitely submit the report? That's right - in sentence **b) Lucinda needn't have submitted the report today.** Lucinda submitted the report, but it wasn't necessary. Sorry Lucinda!

We use the structure **needn't have + past participle** to describe something somebody did even though it wasn't necessary. When we use **didn't need to + verb**, we don't know if someone did something or not.

So, here's a summary of the key differences.



**didn't need to do** = The action wasn't necessary. Maybe you did it; maybe you didn't.

**needn't have done** = You did the action but later realised it wasn't necessary.  
(The action was done, but unnecessarily.)

Here are a few more examples:

- “You **didn't need to cook** dinner. There were plenty of leftovers in the fridge!”  
(You might have cooked it anyway, but it wasn't necessary.)
- “I **needn't have printed** those documents—they emailed me everything this morning.”  
(I printed them, but it wasn't necessary.)

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise these structures by creating your own sentences in the space below.

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## ■ Question 12: What...

Rewrite this sentence beginning with ‘What...’

**The last-minute design change delayed the product launch.**

Do you need some help? Here's a clue - just one word is missing. What delayed the product launch \_\_\_\_\_ the last-minute design change. Ready?

- “What delayed the product launch **was** the last-minute design change.”

We use **what clauses + be** to emphasise new information - the new information comes after the verb ‘to be.’



In this example, '**the last-minute design change**' is the new information being emphasised.

We can also switch the order of the clauses in this sentence. We can put the **what clause** at the end of the sentence -

- "The last-minute design change was **what delayed the product launch.**"

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

## ■ Question 13: Never...

Rewrite this sentence beginning with 'Never...'

**We've never had so many customer complaints in one month.**

Here's the answer.

- "**Never have we** had so many customer complaints in one month."

Did you **change the subject-verb order** to question word order? We use this formal structure to emphasise what we are saying.

Use **Never + auxiliary verb + subject:**

- "**Never can we** repeat this mistake."
- "**Never had we** received so much positive feedback."

In some structures, **be** is the main verb and we don't need to use an auxiliary, for example, 'Never **were** we more confident about an idea.' We can use this



inverted structure with many more words and phrases like ‘**no sooner**’ and ‘**not only**’. Here’s an example with another negative adverbial that takes this pattern.

- “**Not only was** the product launch a resounding success, but it also set a new benchmark for future campaigns.”

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

## ■ Question 14: Little did...

**Little did he know he was about to lose his job.**

Which sentence has the most similar meaning to the sentence above?

- a. He knew he was going to lose his job.**
- b. He had a little information that made him think he might lose his job.**
- c. He had no idea he was going to lose his job.**

The correct answer is **c) He had no idea he was going to lose his job.**

We use the expression **Little did somebody know/understand/realise/suspect** and so on to say that somebody had no idea that something would happen or was true.

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence on the next page.

## ■ Question 15: So...

Rewrite this sentence beginning with the word ‘So...’.

**The negotiations were so tough that both sides had to compromise on key points.**

Ready for the answer?

- “**So tough were** the negotiations that both sides had to compromise on key points.”

Can you see what we’ve done here? We’ve moved **so + adjective** to the beginning of the sentence and then we have the **inversion**. This structure also works with adverbs, for example -

- “**So quickly did he speak** that I couldn’t understand a word of his presentation.”

### Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentences in the space below.

## ■ Question 16: Passive



Rewrite the sentence beginning with the words 'The CEO...'.

**It is alleged that the CEO is stepping down later this year.**

The CEO...

Did you manage to restructure the sentence? It's -

- "The CEO **is alleged to be stepping down** later this year."

We often use the structure in the first sentence: **It + passive verb + that-clause** to avoid saying who made a statement. You've probably heard '**It is thought, believed or claimed that...**'

With some verbs, we can also use the structure **subject + passive verb + to-infinitive** as in the second example.

**The CEO** (the subject) **is alleged** (passive verb) **to be stepping down** (to-infinitive).

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

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## ■ Question 17: Linking Words

Which linking word fits best?

**The presentation was interrupted by technical issues.**

\_\_\_\_\_, the presenter maintained her professionalism and delivered the key points clearly.



- a. Furthermore
- b. Likewise
- c. Nonetheless

The correct answer is **c) nonetheless**.

**Nonetheless** is a synonym of nevertheless and means ‘despite this fact.’ So, in other words, we can say –

- “**Despite interruptions** due to technical issues, the presenter maintained her professionalism and delivered the key points clearly.”

We use ‘**furthermore**’ to add information and ‘**likewise**’ to compare similarities between two or more things.

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this linker by creating your own sentences in the space below.

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## ■ Question 18: Linking Words

**The company reported a rise in profits last quarter, \_\_\_\_\_ a modest one, due to increased demand for its services.**

- a. albeit
- b. in spite of
- c. even if



The correct answer is **a) albeit**.

This has a similar meaning to '**although**' but is generally used in more formal contexts and usually follows a comma. '**Although**' is typically used to introduce a full subordinate clause (**subject + verb**), while '**albeit**' is used to introduce a shorter contrast, usually **followed by an adjective or noun phrase**.

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this linker by creating your own sentence in the space below.

## ■ Question 19: It's essential...

Which of the following options is **not** correct?

**It's essential that the report \_\_\_\_\_ submitted next Friday.**

- a. is
- b. be
- c. will be

The incorrect answer is **c) will be**.

This sentence can be completed with '**is**' or in **the subjunctive mood using 'be'**. In English, we often use the subjunctive mood after phrases like -

- "It's recommended..."
- "It's vital..."

The present subjunctive form is usually just the base form of the verb - in this case, '**be**'.



## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

## Question 20: Reason

Rewrite the second sentence so it has the same meaning as the first.

- 1) I didn't want to offend the client, so I worded the email very carefully.
- 2) I worded the email very carefully so \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ offend the client.

The missing words are '**as not to**'.

- "I worded the email very carefully **so as not** to offend the client."

'**So as not**' to is a synonym for '**in order not to**'. Here's another example:

- "We didn't want to discourage the new employee, so we offered constructive feedback."
- "We offered constructive feedback **so as not to** discourage the new employee."
- We offered constructive feedback **in order not to** discourage the new employee.

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence on the next page.



## ■ Question 21: Too

Rewrite the second sentence, so it has a similar meaning to the first.

- 1) **The problem was too difficult for me to solve by myself.**
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ was too difficult \_\_\_\_\_ for me to solve by myself.

Here's the sentence.

- “**It was too difficult a problem** for me to solve by myself.”

We usually put the article ‘a’ or ‘an’ before the adjective when it describes a noun - **a difficult problem (in this example)**. But in this more formal, emphatic structure, we use **too + adjective + a/an noun**. Here are a couple more examples:

- The investment was too risky to make.  
↓
- It was **too risky an investment** to make.
  
- The decision is too important to be taken quickly.  
↓
- It's **too important a decision** to be taken quickly.

### Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence on the next page.



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## ■ Question 22: Words with Different Grammar

Which word can be used to complete all three?

- a. That was \_\_\_\_\_ presentation! ← speaker loved the presentation (determiner)
- b. He's been collaborating with us for quite \_\_\_\_\_ time. ← a long time (determiner)
- c. They have \_\_\_\_\_ 30 employees in the Mumbai branch. ← approximately (adverb)

The answer is ‘**some**’.

In the first sentence, ‘some’ is used to express the speaker’s favourable opinion of the presentation. In the second, ‘some’ combines with time to mean a long time and in the third, ‘some’ means approximately. Well done if you got ‘some’ used as a determiner and an adverb!

### Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this word by creating your own sentences in the space below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## ■ Question 23: Participle Clauses

This sentence is grammatically correct - true or false?

**Attending the conference, new opportunities appeared.**

The answer is **false** - the sentence is technically not grammatically correct, although many proficient users of English might write something like this!

Let's break the sentence down. The implied subject in the first part of the sentence is '**I**'. **I attended the conference.**

The subject in the second part of the sentence is '**new opportunities**'. However, in English, we prefer to keep the subject in both parts of the sentence the same. If not, it might be understood that '**New opportunities attended the conference!**' So, make sure the subject in the participle clause and the main clause are the same to avoid any potential confusion!

### Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## ■ Question 24: Participle Clauses

Which one of these options **cannot** be used to fill in the blank in this sentence?

\_\_\_\_\_ draw attention to myself, I didn't say anything in the meeting.

- a. Not wishing to
- b. Wishing not to
- c. To not wishing

We cannot say **c) To not wishing.**

Of the two remaining options, **a) is the most likely**. We generally make the participle negative by placing not before it. However, you can sometimes switch the order, like in example b.

## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentences in the space below.

## ■ Question 25: There...

Rewrite this sentence beginning with the word '**There...**'

**As there were no suitable candidates for the role, the hiring process was extended by two weeks.**

The answer is -

- “**There being** no suitable candidates for the role, the hiring process was extended by two weeks.”

We can use the phrase '**there being**' with the meaning of **as** or **because**. It explains the reason for something. It's a formal alternative that's great to use in writing.



## Your Turn: Practise the Grammar

Practise this structure by creating your own sentence in the space below.



## Extra 25 Questions

These questions follow the same order as the grammar structures covered in the video. For each question, choose the correct answer from the options provided.

1. Which word can be used in place of 'if' to make this sentence more formal?  
**If you need any additional details, please reach out to the HR department.**

- A) Would
- B) Should
- C) Could
- D) Will

2. What phrase can be used in the gap to make this situation seem less likely?  
**If you \_\_\_\_\_ receive a reply, please let me know.**

- A) happen to
- B) will happen
- C) was to
- D) have to

3. What word can be added to make this request more polite?

**If you \_\_\_\_\_ get in touch with the client, I'll prepare the invoice in the meantime.**

- A) can
- B) would
- C) do
- D) should

4. Choose the correct verbs to complete the mixed conditional.

**If you \_\_\_\_\_ (prepare) for the interview, you \_\_\_\_\_ (not struggle) to answer these questions.**

- A) had prepared / wouldn't be struggling
- B) prepared / wouldn't struggle
- C) have prepared / wouldn't be struggling
- D) had prepared / wouldn't struggle

5. What word completes this sentence to express disapproval of Alex's behaviour?

**Alex \_\_\_\_\_ keep interrupting us in meetings.**

- A) will
- B) shall
- C) would
- D) can

6. Which of these sentences is correct?

- A) I can't remember where the manager usually sits.
- B) I can't remember where sits the manager usually.



7. Which option completes the sentence correctly?

**It's time the whole team team \_\_\_\_ action to catch up on the delayed project.**

- A) take
- B) took
- C) will take
- D) taking

8. What word can replace 'rather' in this sentence?

**I'd rather discuss the figures after next week than today.**

- A) earlier
- B) sooner
- C) prefer
- D) before

9. Which word increases the probability of this statement being true?

**She could \_\_\_\_ receive the Employee of the Year award this year.**

- A) possibly
- B) well
- C) maybe
- D) literally

10. Which sentence expresses criticism?

- A) You might have told me you'd be late.
- B) You may have told me you'd be late.
- C) You must have told me you'd be late.

11. Which phrase best completes the sentence?

**Sara \_\_\_\_\_ into the office today - most people work from home on Fridays.**

- A) needed to come
- B) need to come
- C) needn't have come
- D) needs to have come

12. Complete the sentence.

**What caused the delay \_\_\_\_ the software update.**

- A) was
- B) is
- C) were
- D) to be

13. Which of these sentences uses inversion for emphasis?

- A) We'd never seen such poor customer service.
- B) Never had we seen such poor customer service.
- C) Never we had seen such poor customer service.



14. Which of the following sentences has the same meaning as "Little did he know the manager was listening."?

- A) He had no idea that the manager was listening.
- B) He suspected that the manager was listening.
- C) He was certain that the manager was listening.

15. Unscramble the words to create a correct sentence using the 'So + Adjective' inversion structure.

**So captivating \_\_\_\_\_.**  
**the / presentation / that / to / was / stayed / end / audience / the / until / entire**

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16. Rewrite the 2nd sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first.

**It is reported that the company will be expanding its operations next year.**

The company \_\_\_\_\_.

17. What word can replace 'Nevertheless' below?

The product didn't perform terribly. Nevertheless, we will have to look into optimising it asap.

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_.

18. What word is missing from the sentence below?

The new team member getting the hang of things, \_\_\_\_\_ slowly.

- A) in spite of
- B) even though
- C) moreover
- D) albeit

19. **Which of these sentences uses the subjunctive mood?**

- A) It is essential that every employee submits their feedback by Friday.
- B) It is essential that every employee submit their feedback by Friday.
- C) It is essential that every employee to submit their feedback by Friday.

20. Which option correctly completes the sentence?

The company changed its logo \_\_\_\_\_ offend any customers.

- A) so to as not
- B) in order to
- C) so as not to
- D) so as to



21. Which of the following sentences uses the correct structure?

- A) It was too big a risk to take.
- B) It was too a big risk to take.
- C) It was a too big risk to take.

22. Which sentence best describes how the speaker feels about the CEO's speech?

**Well, that was some speech the CEO gave!**

- A) The speaker is disappointed as the CEO only delivered part of the speech.
- B) The speaker thinks the speech was great.
- C) The speaker feels some CEOs give better speeches.

23. Which of the following sentences has a correctly structured participle clause?

- A) While jogging in the park, the weather suddenly turned bad.
- B) Looking out the window, the children watched the rain fall.
- C) Cooking dinner, the smoke alarm went off unexpectedly.
- D) While reading a book, the dog barked loudly.

24. Which of the following options CANNOT be used to complete the sentence?

\_\_\_\_\_ to draw attention to himself, he kept a low profile during the meeting.

- A) Not wanting
- B) Wishing not
- C) Not wishing
- D) Wishing to not

25. Which option correctly rewrites the sentence using a formal structure with 'there being'?

**Since there were no clear instructions, the team failed to meet the deadline.**

- A) As there being no clear instructions, the team failed to meet the deadline.
- B) For there being no clear instructions, the team failed to meet the deadline.
- C) There being no clear instructions, the team failed to meet the deadline.





## Extra 25 Questions: Answers

- 1.B
- 2.A
- 3.B
- 4.A
- 5.A
- 6.A
- 7.B
- 8.B
- 9.B
- 10.A
- 11.C
- 12.A
- 13.B
- 14.A
- 15.So captivating was the presentation that the entire audience stayed until the end.
- 16.The company is reported to be expanding its operations next year.
- 17.Nonetheless
- 18.D
- 19.B
- 20.C
- 21.A
- 22.B
- 23.B
- 24.D
- 25.C

C1

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BUSINESS  
ENGLISH**

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At this level, you'll develop the skills to communicate confidently and naturally in the global workplace. Aligned with the B2 CEFR level, it focuses on real-world scenarios to help you express ideas clearly, navigate professional challenges and advance your career without language barriers holding you back.

### **PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH PROGRAMME (LEVEL 3)**

The final stage, which corresponds to the C1 CEFR level, takes your English to a truly professional level. You'll refine your advanced vocabulary and communication skills, gaining the confidence to discuss complex topics, handle high-pressure situations and excel in leadership roles, ensuring your English fully supports your career ambitions.

## C1 BUSINESS ENGLISH QUICK CHECKLIST

<u>Grammar Topics</u>	X	✓
Employ past, present and future tenses and expressions in advanced ways		
Construct passive infinitive, passive -ing and impersonal passive sentences		
Use modal verbs and expressions to signify likelihood and more		
Soften claims and express uncertainty with hedging language		
Replace 'if' with advanced expressions and use inverted conditionals		
Use inversion for emphasis with negative adverbials		
Form cleft sentences for emphasis using 'it', 'what' and 'all'		
Incorporate advanced idioms and phrasal verbs		
Use the subjunctive mood after certain verbs and adjectives		

<u>Vocabulary Topics</u>	X	✓
Develop strategies to handle challenging questions		
Enhance your ability to weigh up pros and cons and justify decisions		
Explore leadership styles and their effectiveness		
Recognise and apply legalese where appropriate in business communication		
Incorporate inclusive language to foster equity in communication		
Reformulate and clarify ideas to ensure mutual understanding		
Engage in discussions about corporate responsibility		
Practise discussing motivation in the workplace		

## A BREAKDOWN OF C1 BUSINESS ENGLISH

The C1 level is fluency with a deep understanding of the nuances of the language.

At C1, you have the freedom to express yourself naturally and you're comfortable in a wide variety of social and professional situations. With C1-level English, you can take on almost any job you're qualified for without worrying about your language skills.

If you're at the advanced level, you can speak spontaneously, even though you might still search for expressions sometimes. You can understand nuance and implicit meaning. That means you know when your manager is dissatisfied, even if they don't say it directly. And it means you understand your colleagues' jokes and can even join in and crack jokes yourself!

C1 demands that you have a wide range of structures at your fingertips. You need to use all the grammar you've covered from A1 to B2. You then need to add to that grammar and combine it to create mostly error-free sentences. There also are a few new structures to learn to make sure you can express yourself accurately in a variety of contexts, from writing proposals and reports to making small talk with clients.

At C1, you also need to expand your vocabulary and functional language so that you are able to add nuance and depth to your English.

C1 is a wonderful level of English to reach. At this level, you should feel confident in almost any situation, professional and personal, and you should really enjoy speaking the language. These are two things that many of my students strive for.

This ebook will walk you through the main grammar and vocabulary you need to know to achieve professional English at the C1 level.

## GRAMMAR - MAIN POINTS

### 1 The Tenses

By the time you start a C1 business course in English, you should already have a strong foundation in the English tenses. An advanced course will allow you to practise employing the **past**, **present** and **future** tenses in a range of contexts, from relating an anecdote to your colleagues to making predictions for the future.

For example, you'll know how to switch between past and present to add drama when telling an anecdote.

- "**We had a meeting with the shareholders yesterday. And... well, as I'm walking into the room, I trip and fall, spilling coffee everywhere.**"

If you're studying at C1, you will also learn how to talk about the future using some advanced structures, like '**to be set to**'.

- "**They're set to announce the CEO appointment in the next few hours.**"

### 2 The Passive Voice

At C1, you should be comfortable using the **passive voice** with different tenses and modal verbs. At an advanced level, you'll focus on using the passive infinitive and passive -ing forms.

- "**The risk of confidential data being leaked was mitigated through enhanced cybersecurity measures.**"

You'll also examine the use of the impersonal passive with reporting verbs to express what an undefined group of people say or believe.

- "**Millions of pounds are thought to have been allocated to the project.**"

### 3 Modal Verbs

At the C1 level, you should already be familiar with many ways to use

modal verbs. When you're at C1, you'll learn about nuanced ways to use these verbs.

For example, you'll know the difference between

- **"May I suggest a different approach?"**

and

- **"Might I suggest a different approach?"**

You'll also know how to use other structures to express likelihood, like 'to stand a good/decent chance of'.

- **"They stand a good chance of winning the contract."**

## 4 Hedging Language

At C1, you'll learn to combine modal verbs with adverbs to increase or decrease the degree of likelihood. This level of nuance is often essential in business.

- **"The decision to outsource may well improve efficiency across departments."**

You'll also learn how to use other structures to hedge your statements and express uncertainty, such as 'it seems as though'.

- **"It seems as though the new product line has failed to attract a new demographic of customers."**

## 5 Conditional Structures

Conditional structures are an essential element of business English. At an advanced level, you'll employ all the conditionals, plus mixed structures, to negotiate, discuss possibilities, make predictions, explore hypothetical situations, and reflect on past decisions. At C1, you'll cover some advanced alternatives to 'if', such as 'without'.

- **"Without the investor's support, the startup would not have survived."**

You'll also look at inverted conditionals with 'should', 'were' and 'had'.

- **"Were we to expand the product line, we would need to find new suppliers."**

## 6 Inversion

In addition to inverted conditionals, you'll also learn how to use inversion after negative adverbials and after words like 'so' and 'such'. This can add emphasis or formality to sentences.

- **"Not only did the client agree to the terms, but they also requested an extension of the partnership."**
- **"So significant was the impact of the new marketing strategy that profits doubled within a year."**

## 7 Cleft Sentences

At C1, you'll learn to use cleft sentences. This structure is so useful in business English, as it helps you emphasise key information like this:

- **"What we need to focus on next quarter is addressing customer dissatisfaction."**

Cleft sentences also help you to give diplomatic answers, like this:

- **"It's the timeline that we find challenging, not the project itself."**

## 8 Idioms and Phrasal Verbs

You began looking at phrasal verbs and idioms earlier on in your English learning journey. At C1, you should be able to use many phrasal verbs and idioms instinctively. You'll also learn more advanced ones. Here are a couple of examples:

**in (the) light of** (idiom)

- **"In the light of recent market trends, we have decided to revise our pricing strategy."**

**to zero in on sth./sb.** (phr v)

- "We need to zero in on the key issues that are holding us back."

## 9 Subjunctive Mood

At C1, you'll learn about how the subjunctive mood is used to convey formality or emphasis when discussing wishes, recommendations, demands and or hypothetical situations.

- "It is recommended that the team be here 30 minutes before the doors open to the public."
- "The manager insisted that the team revise the proposal immediately."

## 10 Additional Structures

There are many more structures that are key when you learn C1 business English. Here is a taster:

### Participle Clauses

- Having had a meeting with the investors, I decided to ask for some revisions to the contract.

### Linking Words

- Notwithstanding the challenges posed by the supply chain disruptions, the company managed to meet its quarterly targets.

### Ellipsis

- Coming to lunch later?

### Advanced Comparatives

- This was not as successful a campaign as we'd hoped.

## VOCABULARY - KEY FOCUS POINTS

At C1, you need a wide range of functional language so that you can express yourself fluently and spontaneously in a variety of workplace contexts. You'll need to know how to handle challenging questions, weigh up pros and cons and discuss leadership styles, motivation and corporate responsibility. You'll also need to learn about persuasive language, legalese, using inclusive language and how to reformulate and clarify what you're saying. In addition to functional language lessons, an advanced business course will teach you a lot of language through reading and listening lessons, allowing you to learn in context.

Here's a snapshot of the types of functional phrases you'll need at C1.

### **Handling Challenging Questions**

From time to time, we all get asked questions that we can't answer for various reasons. Build your confidence and professionalism by learning phrases for handling challenging questions.

- **I'll need a moment to formulate a response.**
- **Let me liaise with the relevant team and come back to you.**

### **Weighing Up Pros and Cons**

Having the language to weigh up pros and cons ensures your choices align with your goals, helps build consensus and demonstrates trust.

- **This approach has its merits.**
- **However, a significant drawback is...**

### **Discussing Leadership Styles**

Knowing how to discuss leadership styles is essential for self-reflection, driving better performance and improving team dynamics.

- **They employ a pacesetting leadership style.**
- **I thrive under a coaching leadership style.**

## Recognising Legalese

At C1, you need to be better able to understand legal English and know when to employ it and when to avoid it.

- **The rights granted herein shall remain in effect for the duration of the contract.**
- **The main points are outlined in the appendix attached herewith.**

## Fostering Equity Through Inclusive Language

By the time you reach C1, you should be familiar with inclusive language. At an advanced level, you'll be able to employ it naturally and instinctively.

Go from -

- **English must be spoken at all times.**

To -

- **Let's use English as the primary language for clarity, but feel free to seek help if needed.**

## Reformulating and Clarifying

The ability to reformulate and clarify your words is key in business to avoid misunderstandings and accommodate diverse audiences.

- **Allow me to reframe the issue.**
- **Let me put that another way.**

## Talking About Corporate Responsibility

Corporate responsibility is a hot topic in the modern workplace.

- **I'd like to present our sustainability agenda.**
- **Greenwashing undermines consumer trust and will only serve to damage our reputation.**

## Examining Motivation at Work

Understanding motivation and demotivation is key to a successful workforce.

- **Marcus has only been doing the bare minimum recently, where he used to go above and beyond.**
- **The unmanageable workload is contributing to dissatisfaction.**

## PRONUNCIATION - 20 MISPRONOUNCED WORDS

Although you don't need to have perfect pronunciation to get your message across, inaccurate pronunciation can make it more difficult for listeners to understand you. With that in mind, my fabulous team have compiled a list of the top 20 mispronounced words in business English. Read them out loud, check you understand the meaning and then click the link below to listen to the audio file with all 20 words. Keep practising until you're happy with how each word sounds!

1. **colleague** (n) /'kɒlɪ:g/ - somebody you work with

- "Some of my **colleagues** attended the conference."



**Lucy's Top Tip:** Make sure you exaggerate the long /i:/ in the 2nd syllable. Tense the muscles in your face and start to smile. KOL-eeg. If the /i:/ sound is too short, the word will sound more like 'college.'

2. **entrepreneur** (n) /,ɒntrəprə'nɜ:/ - somebody who starts or runs their own business

- "He started a business after graduating and is now a successful **entrepreneur**."

3. **development** (n) /dɪ'veləpmənt/ - growth or improvement

- "We understand the importance of staff **development**."



**Lucy's Top Tip:** It's not just individual sounds you need to try and get right. Incorrectly placed word stress often makes a word sound very different and can even lead to a breakdown in communication.

4. **to launch** (v) /lɔ:ntʃ/ - to introduce something new

- "They **launched** the new app yesterday."

5. **engineer** (n) /,endʒɪ'nɪə/ - somebody who designs or builds machines, roads, bridges, etc.

- "We called in an **engineer** to fix the air-conditioning units."

6. **project** (n) /'prɒdʒekt/ - a planned task with specific goals

- "The **project** deadline is next Monday."

7. **bureaucracy** (n) /bjʊə'rɒkrəsi/ - the system of official, often complex, rules in an organisation

- "We need to cut down on unnecessary **bureaucracy** to speed up processes."

8. **objective** (n) /ə'b'dʒektɪv/ - a goal or aim

- "Our main **objective** is to reduce carbon emissions."



**Lucy's Top Tip:** Be careful! **OBject** is stressed on the first syllable, but **objEctive** is stressed on the second!

9. **niche** (n) /ni:ʃ/ - a specialised market or role

- "She found a **niche** in eco-friendly weddings."

10. **analytics** (n) /ænə'lɪtɪks/ - the analysis of data in order to find patterns

- "We used **analytics** to try and better understand our customer base."

11. **infrastructure** (n) /'ɪnfrastrʌktʃə/ - the basic systems a place or business needs to run effectively

- "Better **infrastructure** improved our delivery times."

12. **hierarchy** (n) /'haɪərə:ki/ - a ranking system which places people in order from most to least important

- "The company's **hierarchy** is very clear."

13. **tasks** (n) /ta:sks/ - jobs to be done

- "I'm snowed under with **tasks** at the moment."



**Lucy's Top Tip:** Make sure you pronounce the final /s/ in the /sks/ cluster in the plural form. This consonant cluster can be tricky!

14. **lengthy** (adj) /'leŋkθi/ - long in time

- "We need to reduce the number of obligatory, **lengthy** meetings."

15. **community** (n) /kə'mju:nəti/ - a group of people with shared interests

- "The local **community** supported the initiative."



**Lucy's Top Tip:** Don't forget to add a strong /j/ as in yes before the /u:/ sound. It's almost like you're saying comm-**YOU**-ni-ty.

16. **successfully** (adv) /sək'sesfəli/ - with success; in a way that achieves your aims

- "We were able to install the new software **successfully**."

17. **to bargain** (v) /'ba:gən/ - to negotiate

- "We **bargained** hard for a lower cost per unit and succeeded."

18. **bureau** (n) /'bjʊərəʊ/ - an office or department

- "She works for the Citizen's Advice **Bureau**."

19. **enthusiastic** (adj) /ɪnθju:zi'æstɪk/ - showing interest and/or excitement

- "The team was **enthusiastic** about the proposed changes."

20. **subsidiary** (n) /səb'sɪdiəri/ - a company owned or managed by another

- "Live and Lead is a **subsidiary** of Leader Solutions."

**Click here to access  
the audio files!**



# THE PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH PROGRAMME (LEVEL 3)

## CURRICULUM

### Month 1

Follow a professional as she pitches a new product to potential investors.

#### Week 1

Networking  
and Elevator  
Pitches

	1.1 Listening:	Networking and Pitching
	1.2 Functional Language:	An Elevator Pitch
	1.3 Reading:	An Invitation to Pitch
	1.4 Functional Language:	Cleft Sentences
	1.5 Pronunciation:	Pronunciation Lesson 1

#### Week 2

Pitching

	2.1 Reading:	A Pitch Deck
	2.2 Functional Language:	Crafting a Pitch Deck
	2.3 Listening:	A Pitch to Investors
	2.4 Functional Language:	Engaging an Audience
	2.5 Writing:	Writing a Report
	2.6 Conversation:	Conversation and Analysis 1

# THE PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH PROGRAMME (LEVEL 3)

## CURRICULUM

### Month 1

Follow a professional as she pitches a new product to potential investors.

#### Week 3

#### Challenging Questions

	3.1 Listening:	Investor Questions
	3.2 Functional Language:	Hedging Language
	3.3 Reading:	Handling Challenging Questions
	3.4 Functional Language:	Creating Trust and Building Relationships
	3.5 Pronunciation:	Pronunciation Lesson 2

#### Week 4

#### Legal Language

	4.1 Reading:	Banksia Labs Draft Contract
	4.2 Functional Language:	Legal English
	4.3 Listening:	Contract Revisions
	4.4 Functional Language:	Advanced Conditional Structures
	4.5 Writing:	Writing an Email
	4.6 Conversation:	Conversation and Analysis 2

# THE PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH PROGRAMME (LEVEL 3)

## CURRICULUM

### Month 2

Follow a manager as he works through leadership and recruitment issues.

#### Week 5



##### 5.1 Listening:

Demotivation at Work



##### 5.2 Functional Language:

Advanced Past and Present Tenses

#### Demotivation



##### 5.3 Reading:

Quiet Quitting



##### 5.4 Functional Language:

Advanced Passives



##### 5.5 Pronunciation:

Pronunciation Lesson 3

#### Week 6



##### 6.1 Listening:

Leadership Styles



##### 6.2 Functional Language:

Relative and Participle Clauses

#### Leadership



##### 6.3 Reading:

Motivating a Team



##### 6.4 Functional Language:

Problems and Solutions



##### 6.5 Writing:

Writing a Job Advert



##### 6.6 Conversation:

Conversation and Analysis 3

# THE PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH PROGRAMME (LEVEL 3)

## CURRICULUM

### Month 2

Follow a manager as he works through leadership and recruitment issues.

#### Week 7

#### Hiring and Outsourcing

	7.1 Listening:	In-House Hiring vs. Outsourcing
	7.2 Functional Language:	Weighing Up Pros and Cons
	7.3 Reading:	Recruitment Proposals
	7.4 Functional Language:	Noun Patterns
	7.5 Pronunciation:	Pronunciation Lesson 4

#### Week 8

#### Plan of Action

	8.1 Listening:	A Plan of Action
	8.2 Functional Language:	Emphasising with Inversion
	8.3 Reading:	Notes of Appreciation
	8.4 Functional Language:	Phrasal and Prepositional Verbs
	8.5 Writing:	Writing a Note of Appreciation
	8.6 Conversation:	Conversation and Analysis 4

# THE PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH PROGRAMME (LEVEL 3)

## CURRICULUM

### Month 3

Follow a consultant as she helps an international company address its internal issues.

#### Week 9

Internal Issues

	9.1 Listening:	Greenwashing
	9.2 Functional Language:	Linking Words
	9.3 Reading:	Analysis Report
	9.4 Functional Language:	Subjunctive Mood
	9.5 Pronunciation:	Pronunciation Lesson 5

#### Week 10

Company Culture

	10.1 Listening:	Company Culture
	10.2 Functional Language:	Data Presentation
	10.3 Reading:	A DEI Fact Sheet
	10.4 Functional Language:	Inclusive Language
	10.5 Writing:	Writing a Proposal
	10.6 Conversation:	Conversation and Analysis 5

# THE PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH PROGRAMME (LEVEL 3)

## CURRICULUM

### Month 3

Follow a consultant as she helps an international company address its internal issues.

#### Week 11

	11.1 Listening:	Ramifications
	11.2 Functional Language:	Modals and Degrees of Likelihood
	11.3 Reading:	Questions and Answers
	11.4 Functional Language:	Challenging Facts and Assumptions
	11.6 Pronunciation:	Pronunciation Lesson 6

#### Ramifications

#### Week 12

	12.1 Listening:	A Town Hall
	12.2 Functional Language:	Attitudes to the Future
	12.3 Reading:	A Social Media Post
	12.4 Functional Language:	Review
	12.5 Writing:	Writing a Social Media Post
	12.6 Conversation:	Conversation and Analysis 6

#### A Path Forwards

## WHAT'S NEXT?

## UNLOCK YOUR FULL PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH POTENTIAL!

You've come so far—take a moment to truly appreciate your progress. The hours you've invested, the challenges you've overcome and the confidence you've gained are remarkable achievements. But let me ask you this: **are you ready to feel completely comfortable using English at work?**



This is exactly where **The Professional English Programme Level 3 (PEP3)** comes in. Designed for ambitious professionals ready to achieve C1-level fluency, PEP3 is your opportunity to break through the intermediate plateau and transform your English skills into an effortless, professional asset. Whether you're presenting to executives, negotiating deals or leading a team, this programme will give you the tools to excel with clarity, confidence and precision.

PEP3 is your pathway to fluency and freedom in professional English. With **story-based lessons, real-world conversations** and a **focus on advanced pronunciation**, you'll develop the skills to use English naturally in any situation.

The course launches **19th January 2025!** Don't miss your chance to join the most comprehensive C1-level business English programme available.

*Lucy Bella Simkins*