

**OXFORD** Business English

# INTERNATIONAL EXPRESS

**Pocket Book**

**Upper-Intermediate**

Nick Canham

WORKING

TRAVELLING

SOCIALIZING

**OXFORD**

## CONTENTS

### Grammar

Student's Book unit	Articles	page
3	Articles	1
7, 8	Conditionals	3
7	Functions using <i>if</i>	4
4	Future forms	5
9	<i>I wish .../if only ...</i>	7
6	Modal verbs: obligation, necessity, and permission	7
6	Modal verbs: speculating, expressing certainty and possibility	9
10	Passives	10
5	Past Continuous	11
8	Past modals	11
2, 5	Past Perfect	12
5	Past Perfect Continuous	13
1, 2, 5	Past Simple	13
1, 3	Present Continuous	14
1, 2, 3	Present Perfect	15
2, 3	Present Perfect Continuous	17
1, 3, 4	Present Simple	18
9	Relative clauses	18
	Verb forms	20

### Functional English

5	Chairing a meeting	22
7	Clarifying	23
9	Expressing appreciation and disapproval	23
8	Giving and reacting to bad news	24
3	Holding a phone conference	25
9	Invitations	26
6	Making arrangements	26
1	Making and discussing initial suggestions on the phone	27
4	Offering, accepting, and declining	28
2	Starting a working relationship	28
10	Wrapping up and reviewing a project	29

## GRAMMAR

### Articles

#### Pronunciation

The indefinite article *a* is pronounced /ə/ before consonants and words that start with a /ju/ sound, e.g. *university*, *euro*. *A* becomes *an* before *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, or *u* (when pronounced /ʌ/) and the silent *h* (e.g. *honest*, *honour*, *hour*) and is pronounced /ən/.

The definite article *the* is normally pronounced /ðə/ before consonants and /ði/ before vowels.

#### Definite v indefinite meaning

We often use *a/an* when we mention something for the first time.  
I'm going to a conference next week. (*I haven't told you about this before.*)

The definite article *the* is used before a thing that both the speaker and the listener already know about or which they have mentioned before.  
Did you get the message? (*I am referring to a message we both know about.*)

The conference is in Toronto. (*I mentioned this conference before.*)

#### Uses of *a/an*

We use *a/an* to mean any one member of a class of things.  
Have you got a pen? (*Any pen, it's not important which one.*)

We can use *a/an* with a singular noun to represent a group of things in general.  
A manager should know how to motivate her staff. (*This is true of any one manager.*)

When we define or describe a thing, we usually use *a/an*.  
Botswana is a country in Africa.  
Tom's an accountant.

We don't use *a/an* before plural or uncountable nouns.  
There were handouts for all the delegates.  
The government has released new information.

## Uses of the

We use *the* when we specify which thing we mean.  
Have you got **the** pen I lent you yesterday?  
The life of a rural farmer in Africa is very hard.

We can use *the* with a singular noun to generalize about all members of a class of things.  
The computer has changed the way we work. (*This is true of computers taken as a group.*)

We use *the* before an adjective to describe a class of people.  
The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer.

We don't use *the* before plural or uncountable nouns when we are talking about things in general.  
Offices often have little natural light.  
Honesty is important in business.

In addition, we don't use *the* in these special cases:

- 1 the names of languages  
I speak **English, Chinese, and Dutch.**
- 2 public institutions: *church, college, hospital, prison, school, university, work*, etc. when the speaker is participating in the institution. Compare:  
I went to college in Glasgow. (*I was a student there.*)  
We held a seminar at the college. (*We weren't students. It was just a venue.*)  
But we say:  
I went to **the** cinema, **the** theatre, **the** bank, etc.
- 3 geographical places and features  
Asia, France, Europe, Mount Everest  
But places that contain any of the following words in their name take *the*:  
Union, Kingdom, Republic, Sea, Ocean, Gulf, Pole, River and Isle  
*The* is also used with names of deserts, e.g. *the Sahara*, mountain ranges, e.g. *the Alps*, plural place names, e.g. *the Netherlands*, and before expressions like *the West, the Middle East, the Third World*.
- 4 certain fixed expressions  
have breakfast, make progress, go by car, be on time  
But:  
play **the** piano, listen to **the** radio  
with possessives and parts of the body  
I've read your book.  
My head hurts.  
But passive actions take *the*:  
I was hit on *the* head.

## Conditionals

There are basically four types of conditional sentence, though combinations of the four are also possible depending on the context.

### Zero Conditional

The Zero Conditional uses the Present Simple in the *if* clause and the Present Simple in the main clause.

We use the Zero Conditional to express general truths and scientific facts.

If you arrive late, nobody really minds.  
Water expands if you freeze it.

### 1st Conditional

The 1st Conditional uses the Present Simple in the *if* clause and *will* + infinitive in the main clause.

We use the 1st Conditional to talk about possible future situations that we think may happen, but which won't definitely happen.

If you work hard, you'll get a promotion.

We can replace *will* with a modal verb such as *can, may, must, should*, etc.

If you finish early, you can go home.

You should tell her immediately if you find the package.

### 2nd Conditional

The 2nd Conditional uses the Past Simple in the *if* clause and *would* + infinitive in the main clause.

We use the 2nd Conditional to talk about situations that we think are less likely, imaginary, or impossible.

If I lost my job, I'd start my own business. (*I am unlikely to lose my job.*)

In the *if* clause, we can use *were* instead of *was*. Some people consider *If I were* or *If he/she were* more correct.

I would join the company football team if I was/were ten years younger.

We can replace *would* with the past tense modal verbs *could* or *might*.

If we borrowed more money, we could buy a new photocopier.

### 3rd Conditional

The 3rd Conditional uses the Past Perfect Simple in the *if* clause and *would have* + past participle in the main clause.

We use the 3rd Conditional to talk about past situations that did not happen in reality.

If it hadn't rained, more people would have come. (*In reality, it did rain.*)

We often use the 3rd Conditional to express regrets or criticisms about past events. If we'd sold our shares earlier, we would have lost less money.

We can replace *would have* with the past modal verb forms *could have* or *might have*. If the meeting had finished on time, she might have caught her train. If I had known about your problems, I could have helped you.

### Mixed Conditionals

The verb forms in conditional sentences can be combined to describe a wide variety of situations.

We can combine the Past Perfect in the *if* clause with *would* + infinitive in the main clause. This describes an unreal past situation with a present consequence.

If we hadn't delivered their order on time, they would be really angry.

We can combine the Past Simple in the *if* clause with *will* + infinitive in the main clause. This describes a possible past situation with a future consequence.

If you didn't read my report, you probably won't understand the graph.

We can combine the Past Simple in the *if* clause with *would have* + past participle in the main clause. This describes an unreal present situation with a past consequence. I would have become a policeman if I was taller.

## Functions using *if*

### Giving advice

We often use the phrase *If I were you* to give advice. If I were you, I'd sell the business.

### Making an offer

The phrases *If you like* or *If you want* are often used to introduce offers. If you like, I'll help at the trade fair.

### Asking permission

We use *if* in requests for permission after the phrases *Is it OK/all right...?* and *Do/Would you mind...?* Is it OK if I leave early?

Do you mind if I don't attend the conference?

### Reporting

We use *if* to report questions that can be answered *yes* or *no*. *If* often comes after the verbs *ask* and *wonder*.

She asked him if the company used PCs. ('Does the company use PCs?') They wondered if there would be time. ('Will there be time?')

When reporting a question, we can usually replace *if* with *whether*. She asked him whether the company used PCs.

### Talking about a future possibility

We can use *if* in 1st Conditional sentences (see page 3) to talk about possible future situations. This is often used to make promises.

If you buy the latest model, we'll give you a free service next year.

### Making a request

The phrase *I would be grateful if you could* is a polite way of making a request. Other similar phrases also use *if*, e.g. *I was wondering if you would* and *I'd appreciate it if you could*.

I'd be grateful if you could send me a copy of your catalogue.

### Making a suggestion

We use 1st and 2nd Conditional sentences with *if* to make suggestions for action. If you had some spare cash, you could buy a lottery ticket. You should do an MBA if you want to succeed in business.

## Future forms

In many cases, the meaning of future forms is very similar. Therefore, you can often choose from more than one future form to say the same thing.

### Predictions

We use *will* + infinitive to make predictions about future events.

By 2020, more than 50 per cent of people will work from home. Who do you think will get the job?

When we think the outcome is certain, we can also use *will* + infinitive. Ask Tim to type the report. He'll do it.

We can use *be going to* + infinitive to make predictions, especially when we have present evidence.

Be careful! You're going to break it. (I can see the object slipping.) From what we know so far, it's going to be a difficult year. (We already have evidence.)

We can use the Future Continuous (*will be doing*) to make predictions about actions or habits in the future.

Soon, all taxi firms will be using satellite navigation.

We often use the Future Continuous to talk about actions or events happening at a point of time in the future.

This time next year, we'll be lying on the beach in Tenerife.

We use the Future Perfect (*will have* + past participle) to make predictions about events happening before a future time.

We *will have* repaid the loan by 2015.

*Will* you have finished the report by the time I get back?

We can sometimes replace *will* with a modal verb, e.g. *may, should, or would*.

What benefits *would* come with the job? (*More polite that asking 'will come'.*)

By next year, they *should have completed* the stadium. (*Less certain than 'will they have completed'.*)

For more on speculating, expressing certainty and possibility using *may, can, could*, etc., see modal verbs page 11.

### Plans and arrangements

We use *be going to* + infinitive to talk about intentions.

Jan's *going to apply* for another job.

What *are you going to do* today?

We can also use the Present Continuous to talk about future plans, especially when we have made an arrangement.

I'm *taking* Mr Suzuki for lunch. (*It's in my diary.*)

*Are you doing* anything interesting this weekend? (*What have you arranged?*)

We can also use Future Continuous (*will be doing*) to talk about future arrangements. This often means that the arrangement is fixed: we can't control whether the arrangement happens or not.

Don't ring me at 5 p.m. I'll *be making* my presentation.

Harry *will be meeting* Mr Stein at the airport.

Using the Future Continuous is a polite way to ask people about their intentions without trying to influence them.

*Will you be needing* any more help with this, or can I go home now?

*Will you be seeing* Michael next week? If so, could you give him this?

### Decisions

We use *will* + infinitive to react to events that have just happened or to something that has just been said.

The phone's ringing, can someone answer it? – OK, I'll get it.

What would you like to drink? – I'll have a beer please.

### Scheduled events

We usually talk about scheduled future events using the Present Simple.

The tax year *ends* in April.

The train *leaves* in half an hour.

### Special expressions for prediction

We can use special verbs, e.g. *expect, predict, hope*, to make predictions.

We *expect* Sarah to be appointed to the board.

Using these verbs in the passive can suggest that other people or most people make the same prediction.

More than 100 people *are expected* to attend the Christmas party.

### I wish .../If only ...

We can use *I wish .../If only ...* to talk about situations we want to be different from reality.

I *wish* I lived in France. (... *but I don't live* in France)

*If only* I had got the job. (... *but I didn't get* the job.)

When we want present situations to change, we normally use *I wish .../If only ...* with the Past Simple.

I *wish* we had more staff. (*We haven't got enough staff now.*)

When we regret past situations, we normally use *I wish .../If only ...* with the Past Perfect Simple.

*If only* I hadn't left the water running. (*I did the leave the water running.*)

We use *I wish .../If only ...* + *could* to talk about abilities we want to have.

I *wish* I *could afford* a new car. (*I can't afford one.*)

We use *I wish ...* + *would* to talk about future situations we would like change. I wish prices *would stop rising*. (... *but it looks like they won't.*)

Using *I wish ...* + *would* sometimes means that we are annoyed or that we are telling someone to change what they do.

I *wish* they'd pay their bills quicker. (*It's annoying that they don't.*)

I *wish* you *wouldn't keep ringing* me. (*Please stop ringing me.*)

### Modals verbs: obligation, necessity, and permission

#### Obligation – must

We use *must* to talk about obligation with a strong sense of personal authority. You *must return* the form by next week. (*I'm telling you.*)

We also use *must* to talk about obligations in formal rules or declarations.

All computers *must be switched off* at the weekend.

When we place obligations on ourselves, we also use *must*.

I *must take* a holiday soon. (*I think this would be a good idea.*)

The negative *mustn't* indicates an obligation not to do something.

Tenants *mustn't* keep pets in their rooms.  
I *mustn't* go to bed late tonight.

*Must* is not used to express obligation in the past. Instead, we use *had to*.  
I *had to* go to a meeting in Georgia last week. It was a really interesting trip.

### **Obligation – have to**

To express obligation from an outside authority, we use *have to*.

What time *do you have to* get up in the morning?

In most countries in Europe *you have to* wear a helmet if you ride a motorbike.

*Have to* is not usually contracted to *'ve to*.

We *have to* leave in time to catch the four o'clock train. (Not *we've to* ...)

In informal contexts, *have to* can often be replaced by *have got to* or *'ve got to*.  
I've got to email all of our European customers.

The negative *don't have to* indicates there is no obligation.

Staff *don't have to* work on Saturdays.

*You didn't have to* book a ticket – you can pay on the door.

### **Obligation – should**

We also use *should* to talk about obligation. *Should* normally implies weaker obligation than *must*.

The company *should* start a flexible working scheme. (*It's possible that they won't.*)

They *shouldn't* block the fire door.

We can also use *ought to* with the same meaning as *should*.

*You ought to* buy a new car.

### **Necessity**

*Need* to can have a similar meaning to *have to*, but can also express a more general necessity.

Most businesses *need to* keep a database of clients.

We *don't need to* leave yet – it's too early.

When we express a lack of necessity, we can also use *needn't* as a modal verb.

*You needn't* pay me yet. I'll invoice you next month.

To talk about necessity in the past we use *needed to*.

Sorry I'm late. I *needed to* go to a cashpoint.

When we talk about lack of necessity in the past, *didn't need to* and *needn't have* have different meanings. We use *didn't need to* when an action was not necessary. We use *needn't have* when an action was not necessary, but we did it anyway.

We *didn't need to* wear suits at the conference. (*So we didn't wear suits.*)

We *needn't* have worn suits at the conference. (*But in fact we did wear suits.*)

### **Permission**

We use *can* to talk about permission in general.

We *can* use our mobile phones in the office.

*You can* use the office telephones for limited personal use.

We also use *be allowed to* to talk about permission.

They're *allowed to* hold meetings in the canteen.

*You're allowed to* park in front of the building.

To talk about a lack of permission, we use either *be not allowed to* or *can't*.

*You're not allowed to* use personal recording equipment in the office.

We *can't* smoke anywhere on the premises.

*May* and *may not* are used to talk about permission more formally.

Visitors *may not* take photographs of the exhibits.

*You may* take up to 25 days holiday each calendar year.

To talk about permission in the past, we use *could* or *wash/were allowed to*.

When you were at school, *could you* eat whatever you wanted?

I *couldn't* take more than 30 minutes for lunch in my old job.

We *weren't* allowed to leave the hotel.

## **Modal verbs: speculating, expressing certainty and possibility**

### **Certainty**

When we make deductions about the present or past, we use *must* to show a strong degree of certainty.

Carol *must* live close to the office because she's never late.

John *must* have been fired – his desk's gone.

To show a strong degree of certainty that something isn't the case, we use *can't* (or sometimes *couldn't* in the past).

It *can't* be just a problem with my computer – no computers in the office are working.

It *couldn't* have been Joe you saw – he's in Mongolia.

We use *must have*, *can't have*, etc. with the past participle to talk about certainty in the past.

We *can't* have lost the plans. They were on my desk this morning.

For more on past modals, see page 111.

### **Possibility**

*Can* is used to talk about general possibilities or truths.

This PC *can* crash without warning.

Taking out a loan *can* be a risky business.



When we speculate that something is possible, we use *may*, *might*, *would*, or *could*.  
 There's a message on the answerphone. It *may/might/could* be from Jim.  
 What do you think has happened? – They *may/might/could* have missed the train.

Similarly, when we speculate about the chances of something happening in the future, we use *may* or *might*.  
 We *may* go this month or next, I'm not sure.  
 It *might* be sunny when we're in Manchester next week.

The modal verbs *can* and *could*, which express possibility, also suggest that someone has the ability to do something.  
 I *could* join the company football team.

You *can* arrange the meeting yourself if you have the time.

We use *may have*, *could have*, etc. with the past participle to talk about possibility in the past.

When I ring, there's no reply. – They *might have* gone out.

For more on past modals, see page 11.

## Passives

To form passives, we use the verb *to be* and the past participle.

They *produce* rubber in Malaysia. (Active – Present Simple)

Rubber *is produced* in Malaysia. (Passive – Present Simple of *to be* + past participle)

To change the tense of a passive sentence, we change the tense of the verb *to be*.

A new road *is being built*. (Present Continuous of *to be* + past participle)

The cleaners *were made* redundant. (Past Simple of *to be* + past participle)

Those customers *have not been* invoiced for three months. (Present Perfect of *to be* + past participle)

Your order *will be* processed within three days. (will Future of *to be* + past participle)

We often use a passive sentence when we don't want to say who performs the action.

These shoes *were made* in Italy. (It is of little interest exactly who made the shoes.)

Several attempts *have been made* to convert stone into gold. (It is unnecessary or difficult to identify who made the attempts.)

When it is necessary to identify who performs the action, we use *by*. This often draws attention to the person who did it.

Our headquarters *were designed* by a famous architect.

That report *was written* by me.

Passive sentences can be used to report what is commonly believed to be true, using verbs such as *believe*, *report*, *say*, and *think*.

Climate change *is thought to be* the biggest problem facing the planet.

## Past Continuous

The Past Continuous is formed using *was/were* and the -ing form of the verb.

We *didn't go* because it *was raining*.

They *were negotiating* a new contract last week.

We use the Past Continuous to describe something in progress at a particular time in the past.

I *phoned* you last night at around seven. – Yes, sorry I *was having* a bath then.

We often use the Past Continuous in this way to give a background to a narrative. In the early days, we *had no* problems. Our products *were selling* well, and we *were making* good profits.

We can also use the Past Continuous to show that an activity was interrupted or incomplete. In contrast, the Past Simple suggests completed activities in sequence.

I *was leaving* the office when Tom *arrived*. (I *had not completely left* the office.)

I *left* the office when Tom *arrived*. (Tom *arrived*, then I *left*.)

The lab workers *were developing* a new vaccine. (We *don't know* if they *completed the development*.)

The lab workers *developed* a new vaccine. (We *know they developed the vaccine*.)

## Past modals

We form past modals using a modal verb + *have* + past participle.

We normally use past modals to:

- 1 talk about regrets and criticisms about past actions or situations
- 2 speculate or make deductions about a past action or situation

### Regrets and criticisms

We use *shouldn't have* + past participle to talk about past actions of situations we regret.

I *really should have told* my manager about the customer's complaint. (I *didn't tell my manager*.)

Geri *decided she shouldn't have volunteered* to go. (Geri *did volunteer*.)

We also use *shouldn't have* + past participle to make criticisms of past actions or situations.

Frank, you *shouldn't have called* me. (Frank *did call*.)

They *should have invested* more money in the project. (They *didn't invest enough money*.)

*Ought to have* + past participle can be used instead of *should/shouldn't have* + past participle to express regrets and criticisms.

*We ought to have had* a meeting.

The modal verbs *would* and *could* can also be used to express regrets and criticisms.

*I would have done* a better job of the sales campaign.

*We could have advertised* the vacancy sooner.

### Speculation and deduction

We use *must have* + past participle when we feel very certain about a situation in the past.

Life 100 years ago **must have been** very difficult.

Sally **must have worked** hard to get where she is.

We use *can't/couldn't have* + past participle when we feel very certain that a past situation was not the case.

I **didn't receive** the bill. You **can't have sent** it.

The inventors of the motor car **couldn't have known** the impact it would have.

When we speculate without certainty about past events, we use *may/might/could have* + past participle.

This coffee **might have come** from Central America.

The documents **haven't arrived**. They **could have got** lost in the post.

I'll come to the presentation, but I think I **may have seen** it already.

Past modals are closely related to the 3rd Conditional (page 3) and *I wish .../If only ...* (page 7).

### Past Perfect

The Past Perfect is formed from *had* + past participle.

Some of the delegates **had registered** early.

*We hadn't been* there before.

When we need to talk about an action that happened before another time in the past, we use the Past Perfect. Compare:

They **had already left** when we arrived. (*They left, then we arrived.*)

They **left** when we arrived. (*Past Simple – We arrived, then they left.*)

The Past Perfect can describe a habit or state up to a time in the past.

They **had travelled** on the same bus every day for five years.

She **had been** departmental manager since the start of the year.

The Past Perfect is often used with verbs like *realize*, *think*, *wonder*, and *say*.

We **realized** that we **had made** a terrible mistake.

Did you **wonder** where you **had put** your keys?

### Past Perfect Continuous

The Past Perfect Continuous is formed from *had been* and the *-ing* form of the main verb.

He **had been travelling** a lot on business.

*We'd been investigating* the reasons for our losses.

Like the Past Perfect, the Past Perfect Continuous describes an action or situation up to or before a time in the past.

Before she **joined** our company, Teri **had been working** for the post office.

In 2005, I'd **been living** in Germany for two years.

The Past Perfect Continuous can emphasize that an activity or event is repeated.

Compare:

I **phoned** the garage because my car **had been making** strange noises. (*More than once.*)

I **phoned** the garage because my car **had made** a strange noise. (*Just once.*)

The Past Perfect Continuous can also emphasize that an activity or event is incomplete. Compare:

Marc **was tired** because he'd **been painting** the ceiling. (*Marc possibly didn't finish the job.*)

Marc **was tired** because he'd **painted** the ceiling. (*Past Perfect – Marc finished the job.*)

### Past Simple

The form of the Past Simple depends on whether the verb is regular or irregular. In regular verbs, we add the ending *-ed*, making small spelling changes where necessary: *studied, travelled, opened*, etc.

Some of the most common verbs in English have irregular past forms, e.g. *knew, thought, put, became*. These forms must simply be learnt.

We normally use the Past Simple for actions, states, or habits in the past when we have a definite time in mind.

I **left** university in 2002.

When he **was** in London, Bill **travelled** on the underground everyday.

Karen **felt** happy when she **moved** to the Caribbean.

The Past Simple can emphasize past situations that do not continue until now.

I **lived** in Slovakia for six months. (*But I don't live there any more.*)

Mrs Brown **worked** for the family business all her life. (*Mrs Brown is now dead.*)

We also use the Past Simple when something happened within a time frame which has finished.

I **sold** fifteen cars in January. (*January has finished.*)



The uses of the Past Simple make it important for narrating events in the past. Ena Walters started the company in 1999. She **bought** a small workshop and employed six members of staff. In its first year, the company **made** \$2 million. The Past Simple contrasts strongly with the Present Perfect (page 15).

## Present Continuous

We use the Present Continuous to talk about temporary situations and actions at the present moment.

What's Tina doing? – She's preparing the report.

What are you doing? – I'm trying to fix this computer.

We use the Present Continuous to talk about temporary situations, whereas the Present Simple normally refers to permanent situations.

Chris is living with me until he finds permanent accommodation. (*It's temporary.*)

Chris's parents live in Manchester. (*It's permanent.*)

We also use the Present Continuous to talk about current trends.

People are becoming more interested in eco-travel.

Internet shops are attracting more customers.

The Present Continuous is sometimes used to talk about habits, often to express annoyance. In this context, we often add the adverb *always*.

My boss is always giving me boring work to do.

## State and action verbs

Verbs relating to being and having are not normally used in the Present Continuous.

This folder contains all the information you need. (Not *The folder is containing ...*)

John really resembles his father. (Not *John is really resembling ...*)

However, when we use *have* to indicate an activity, e.g. *have lunch*, *have a meeting*, we can use the Present Continuous.

I can't get contact Mrs Tomlin – she's probably having lunch.

Also, verbs relating to thinking and the senses are not normally used in the Present Continuous.

I believe we should invest more in R&D. (Not *I'm believing ...*)

I can hear a buzzing noise. (Not *I'm hearing ...*)

However, we make an exception when we see thinking as an activity in progress. Compare:

I think the price of oil will rise. (*think means 'have an opinion'*)

I'm thinking about the oil market. (*think is a mental activity*)

With a small number of sensation verbs, e.g. *feel*, *hurt*, *ache*, we can use either the Present Continuous or the Present Simple for a temporary sensation. Do you feel refreshed after your holiday? – Yes, I feel/I'm feeling great. I've been typing too much. My hands hurt/are hurting.

## Future meaning

We can also use the Present Continuous to talk about future plans, especially when we have made an arrangement.

I'm leaving on the 3.15 to Hull.

We're going to Scotland for the weekend.

## Present Perfect

The Present Perfect is formed using *have/has* + past participle.

In general, the Present Perfect relates to past situations which relate to the present in some way. We use the Present Perfect to talk about:

- 1 situations with a result now
- 2 habits and states which lead up to the present
- 3 experiences which took place at an unspecified time in the past

## Situations with a result now

We use the Present Perfect when there is a present result.

Who has drunk all my water? (*There is no wine in my glass now.*)

Why are you looking so sad? What's happened?

This use of the Present Perfect often means that something happened recently.

Therefore, we often use the Present Perfect for giving news.

Your delivery has arrived. (*It's here now.*)

The government has put up the price of petrol again. (*This happened recently.*)

We often use the adverb just with the Present Perfect to emphasize that an event is recent.

The train has just left.

## Habits and states which lead up to the present

We use the Present Perfect to talk about habits that lead up to the present.

I've always cycled to work. (*I still cycle to work.*)

Tom has played for this team for ten years. (*He still plays.*)

We can also the Present Perfect to talk about states that lead up to the present, using verbs such as *be*, *have*, *possess*, *know*, and *live*.

She's been a doctor for twenty years.

Have you known each other for long?

We often use phrases beginning with *for* or *since* with the Present Perfect to emphasize a period until now.

I've owned my own house **for five years**.

We have made a profit every year **since the company was founded**.

### **Experiences at an unspecified past time**

We use the Present Perfect to talk about experiences which took place at an unspecified time in the past.

I've been to Germany several times. (*It's not important when.*)

Have you done the presentations course? (*At some time in the past.*)

We often use the adverb *never* with the Present Perfect when something did not happen at any time in the past.

I've never been to St Petersburg.

We use *ever* with the Present Perfect in questions and after certain negative words, e.g. *nobody* or *nothing*.

Have you ever met the CEO?

Nobody's ever been sacked before.

We can also use the adverbs *yet* and *already* with the Present Perfect to emphasize that an event did or didn't happen at a time before now.

We haven't received the post yet.

I've seen that film already.

### **Present Perfect v Past Simple**

The meaning and use of the Present Perfect is often clearer when it is compared with the Past Simple.

Whereas the Present Perfect can describe a past event with a present result, the Past Simple implies the time frame for the event has finished. Compare:

Sandra has applied for the vacancy in sales. (*Her application is in. She might get the job.*)

Sandra applied for the vacancy in sales. (*The situation is finished. She didn't get the job.*)

While the Present Perfect can describe a habit or state which leads up to now, the Past Simple emphasizes that the situation does not continue until now. Compare:

They've had an office in Bangkok for twenty years. (*They still do.*)

They had an office in Bangkok for twenty years. (*But they don't now.*)

and:

She has always arrived on time. (*She still works here.*)

She always arrived on time. (*She doesn't work here any more.*)

Whereas the Present Perfect can describe an event which happened at an unspecified time in the past, we use the Past Simple when we have a definite time in mind. Compare:

We've met the ambassador before. (*At some time in the past.*)

We met the ambassador in 2005. (*The time is specified.*)

Note that we often introduce a past event using the Present Perfect. However, when we move on to the details (*when? why? who? where? how?*) we use the Past Simple.

Person A: I've passed my driving test.

Person B: Really. When did you take it? Was it difficult?

### **Present Perfect Continuous**

Like the Present Perfect, the Present Perfect Continuous describes past situations which relate to the present in some way.

We can use the Present Perfect Continuous to talk about recent activities with a present result.

Has it been raining again?

Tom has been working hard. That's why he's tired.

In this context, we often use the Present Perfect Continuous to describe an activity or situation that was repeated or ongoing, whereas the Present Perfect describes a momentary event. Compare:

I've been destroying the confidential files. (*I destroyed them one at a time.*)

I've destroyed the confidential files. (*I destroyed them in one go.*)

We can use the Present Perfect Continuous to talk about temporary habits or situations leading up to the present.

I've been sitting here for over an hour.

Claire has been working here since Christmas.

Whereas the Present Perfect Continuous describes a temporary habit or situation leading up to the present, the Present Perfect is used for more permanent situations. Compare:

Kingsley has been living in that house since he moved to Oxford. (*more temporary*)

Kingsley has lived in that house since he moved to Oxford. (*more permanent*)

The Present Perfect suggests an activity was completed, whereas the Present Perfect Continuous suggests it might be unfinished. Compare:

I've been writing the report. (*But I haven't finished it.*)

I've written the report. (*It's ready now.*)

## Present Simple

We use the Present Simple for talking about habits, regular activities, or repeated events in the present.

Barbara goes to work by bus.

We have our Christmas party in the canteen every year.

When we use the Present Simple for habits, we often add adverbs such as *every day/week/month, always, usually, sometimes, rarely or never*.

They usually answer the phone quickly in customer services.

We meet to discuss the project every two weeks.

We also use the Present Simple to talk about permanent situations or states.

Adam lives in North Wales.

Fiona owns a small flat in London.

The Present Simple is useful for stating general facts.

Water boils at 100°C in normal conditions.

The River Tagus flows through Lisbon.

## Future meaning

We usually talk about scheduled future events using the Present Simple.

The tax year ends in April.

The train leaves in half an hour.

## Relative clauses

### Defining relative clauses

We use defining relative clauses to identify or classify a person or a thing. We do not use commas to separate defining relative clauses.

Did you get back to the man who left a message?

The area where I live has a good reputation for nightlife.

It was the department which experienced the most redundancies.

### Non-defining relative clauses

We use non-defining relative clauses to give additional information about a person or a thing we have already identified. We use commas to separate non-defining relative clauses from the rest of the sentence.

Can I introduce you to Mr Jones, who will be managing the project?

The XT 200 model, which had a lot of defects, has been discontinued.

I'm going to Bahrain, where they're having a conference.

## Relative pronouns

We use *who* for people and *which* for things.

I like people who say what they mean.

Can I see the report which caused such a controversy?

*That* can replace *who* and *which* in defining relative clauses, but not in non-defining relative clauses.

This is the computer that/which I was telling you about.

He lives in Oslo, which is the capital of Norway. (Not *that* ...)

We can omit the relative pronoun in defining relative clauses when it represents the object of the relative clause.

I regret the option (that) we chose. (*We chose that - object*.)

Terry was the manager who chose that option. (*Terry chose that option - subject*.)

The pronoun *whose* is used for people, animals, or organizations to indicate the possessive.

They are a team whose luck has run out. (*The team's luck*.)

Most of the responsibility fell to Karen, whose assistant was unfortunately ill. (*Karen's assistant*.)

The *wh-* words *when*, *where*, and *why* can also be used to introduce relative clauses.

September was the month when they lifted the ban.

I normally eat lunch in North Park, where it actually gets quite busy.

That's the reason why I was late.

Prepositions usually appear at the end of a relative clause, but in formal contexts they appear before the relative pronoun.

This is the proposal which I was referring to. (*less formal*)

This is the proposal to which I was referring. (*more formal*)

### Relative clauses and quantifiers

In non-defining relative clauses, words and expressions such as *all, each, none, some, several, many, most* can be used with *of whom* or *of which*.

I led a group of tourists, none of whom spoke any English.

I've got hundreds of CDs, most of which I never listen to.

# Verb forms

	AFFIRMATIVE	NEGATIVE	INTERROGATIVE	SHORT ANSWER
PRESENT SIMPLE	I/You/We/They work every day. He/She works every day.	I/You/We/They don't (do not) work every day. He/She doesn't (does not) work every day.	Do I/you/we/they work every day? Does he/she work every day?	Yes, I/you/we/they do. Yes, he/she does. No, I/you/we/they don't. No, he/she doesn't.
PRESENT CONTINUOUS	I'm (am) working every day. You/We/They're (are) working every day. He/She's (is) working every day.	I'm (am) not working every day. You/We/They aren't (are not) working every day. You/We/They're (are) not working every day. He/She isn't (is not) working every day.	Am I working every day? Are I/you/we/they working every day? Is he/she working every day?	Yes, I am. Yes, you/we/they are. Yes, he/she is. No, I'm not. No, you/we/they aren't. No, he/she isn't.
PRESENT PERFECT SIMPLE	I/You/We/They've (have) worked every day. He/She's (has) worked every day.	I/You/We/They haven't (have not) worked every day. He/She hasn't (has not) worked every day.	Have I/you/we/they worked every day? Has he/she worked every day?	Yes, I/you/we/they have. Yes, he/she has. No, I/you/we/they haven't. No, he/she hasn't.
PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS	I/You/We/They've (have) been working every day. He/She's (has) been working every day.	I/You/We/They haven't (have not) been working every day. He/She hasn't (has not) been working every day.	Have I/you/we/they been working every day? Has he/she been working every day?	Yes, I/you/we/they have. Yes, he/she has. No, I/you/we/they haven't. No, he/she hasn't.
PAST SIMPLE	I/You/He/She/We/They worked every day.	I/You/He/She/We/They didn't (did not) work every day.	Did I/you/he/she/we/they work every day?	Yes, I/you/he/she/we/they did. No, I/you/he/she/we/they didn't.
PAST CONTINUOUS	I/He/She was working every day. You/We/They were working every day.	I/He/She wasn't (was not) working every day. You/We/They weren't (were not) working every day.	Was I/he/she working every day? Were you/we/they working every day?	Yes, I/he/she was. Yes, you/we/they were. No, I/he/she wasn't. No, you/we/they weren't.
PAST PERFECT SIMPLE	I/You/He/She/We/They had worked every day.	I/You/He/She/We/They hadn't (had not) worked every day.	Had I/you/he/she/we/they worked every day?	Yes, I/you/he/she/we/they had. No, I/you/he/she/we/they hadn't.
PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS	I/You/He/She/We/They had been working every day.	I/You/He/She/We/They hadn't (had not) been working every day.	Had I/you/he/she/we/they been working every day?	Yes, I/you/he/she/we/they had. No, I/you/he/she/we/they hadn't.
will FUTURE	I/You/He/She/We/They will work every day.	I/You/He/She/We/They won't (will not) work every day.	Will I/you/he/she/we/they work every day?	Yes, I/you/he/she/we/they will. No, I/you/he/she/we/they won't.
be going to FUTURE	I'm (am) going to work every day. You/We/They're (are) going to work every day. He/She's (is) going to work every day.	I'm (am) not going to work every day. You/We/They're not (are not) going to work every day. He/She isn't (is not) going to work every day.	Am I going to work every day? Are you/we/they going to work every day? Is he/she going to work every day?	Yes, I am. Yes, you/we/they are. Yes, he/she is. No, I'm not. No, you/we/they aren't. No, he/she isn't.
FUTURE CONTINUOUS	I/You/He/She/We/They'll (will) be working every day.	I/You/He/She/We/They won't (will not) be working every day.	Will I/you/he/she/we/they be working every day?	Yes, I/you/he/she/we/they will. No, I/you/he/she/we/they won't.
FUTURE PERFECT SIMPLE	I/You/He/She/We/They'll (will) have worked every day.	I/You/He/She/We/They won't (will not) have worked every day.	Will I/you/he/she/we/they have worked every day?	Yes, I/you/he/she/we/they will. No, I/you/he/she/we/they won't.

## Chairing a meeting

### Introducing and starting a meeting

I'd like to start by formally welcoming Bruno.  
OK, if we could start by looking at the first item on the agenda.  
Shall we make a start?  
I think we're all here, so let's get going.

### Closing a point

So that deals with the question of ...  
OK, let's leave it there.

### Introducing the next point

I'm very conscious of time, so I wanted to move on to the next item on the agenda.  
Right, so, moving on. The next item is ...  
OK, let's move on to the next point./Shall we go on to look at ... now?

### Allowing someone to comment

Has anyone got any thoughts?  
Alice, perhaps you could give a brief report on this.  
Perhaps I could bring in Carla at this point.  
Darren, would you like to add anything?  
Francine, can you give us an update on ...?

### Referring to a document

You'll see that I've highlighted some of the items which concern me most.  
Now, you've got a detailed report in front of you, which I hope you've all had a chance to look at.  
If you could just look at points one and four in particular.

### Closing a meeting

Unless anyone has any other business ... I think we can bring things to a close.  
I think that's everything.  
To sum up, we've sorted out the problem of ..., we've ...  
Can we just recap what we've decided?  
Have I missed anything?  
Thank you all for your contributions./Thank you all for coming.  
I have to say I think it's been a very useful meeting.  
Shall we get some coffee?

## Clarifying

### Asking for clarification

Is that correct?  
I wonder if you could just clarify what you mean by ...?  
Could you give me some specific information?/Could you be more specific?  
To put my mind at rest, could you send me ...?  
What exactly do you mean by ...?  
Can you just run that by me again? Basically what you're saying is ...  
So, if I understand you correctly, .../And, correct me if I'm wrong, ...  
I just wanted to check .../Did you say ...?

### Giving clarification

I am writing/calling to confirm that the arrangements have been made.  
For your information, I can also confirm that ...  
I hope everything is now clear.  
Please let me know if you require further clarification.  
Exactly./That's right.  
Not exactly.  
It's hard to say.

### Responding to clarification

Many thanks for the information.  
Everything is now clear.  
So, if I phone again in a couple of hours, you should be able to ...

## Expressing appreciation and disapproval

### Expressing appreciation

I just wanted to thank you for all your hard work.  
I'd like to say it's been a pleasure working with you.  
I really appreciate what you've done.  
It was an honour to have you involved.  
You've helped the project go really smoothly.

### Expressing disapproval

To be honest, I didn't think much of it.  
In fact I thought it was pretty weak.

### Acknowledging appreciation

Thank you, that's very kind.  
No problem./My pleasure./Don't mention it.

## Giving and reacting to bad news

### Breaking bad news

I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but ...  
I'm afraid we've got a problem.  
I've got to tell you there's been some more bad news.  
I'm afraid I've got some bad news for you.  
Unfortunately, things aren't looking good with ...

### Reacting to bad news

Oh no, what now?  
It sounds like you've got some real problems.  
Wow, that is bad news.  
It's terrible news about ...  
I'm really sorry to hear that.  
That's a real shame.

### Giving good news

Here's something I think you might like.  
Guess what? We've just had some good news.  
I'm pleased to announce that ...

### Reacting to good news

That's a terrific idea.  
That's great.  
I'm really pleased to hear that.  
That's a relief.

### Proposing a solution

I've thought of another solution.  
The only solution I can think of is to ...  
I don't know how you'll feel about it but here goes. How about if ...?  
How about if we ...?  
Look, I'll tell you what. Let me ...  
I'm sure I can sort something out.  
What I'll do is ...  
Why don't we ...?  
One option we could try is to ...  
Another possible solution would be ...  
Have you thought of trying ...?

## Holding a phone conference

### Sorting out technical problems

Is everyone picking up all right?  
I'm getting a bit of an echo.  
You sound very faint.  
Hold on, I'm losing you.  
There's a high-pitched noise going on.  
Have you got your phone on speaker-phone?  
Try taking it off speaker-phone and just pick up the receiver.  
Is that any better?  
Oh, that's better.

### Making small talk

How are things in Melbourne?/How are things with you?  
Keeping busy, I hear?

### Managing the phone conference

We'll start with Tom giving us some information on ...  
... then Sarah's going to talk about ...  
... and finally, Ugo will update us on ...  
I think that about finishes it.

### Identifying each speaker

Can I just remind you all to say your name when you speak?  
This is Rob./Vera speaking.  
Penny here, by the way.  
This is Rob again./Penny again.

### Turn-taking

Michelle, can I come in?/If I can just come in here.  
Could I just say something here?/Can I just interrupt a moment?

### Turn-giving

OK Neil, do you want to start?  
No, you go first.  
Lisa, tell us about the new appointment.  
Karen, do you want to tell them about ...?  
What do the rest of you think?  
What are your thoughts about that?  
Oliver, would you like to tell us about ...?  
Sorry Oliver, what were you saying?  
Anyone got any suggestions?



## Invitations

### Making an invitation

Fancy coming to ...?/Do you fancy coming ...? (very informal)  
Are you free on Friday?/If you're free ..., would you like to ...?  
How about coming to ...?  
If you're not busy on Thursday, would you like to come to ...?  
Iida, do you want to come with me to ...?  
We're organizing a ... Do you think you could make it?  
We'd love you to ...

### Accepting an invitation

That's very kind. I'd love to come. What time does it start?  
Yeah, that sounds good./Sounds great./What a nice idea.

### Declining an invitation

Sorry, I'm afraid I'm doing something else. Maybe some other time.  
Thanks, but I've got to finish this report. Sorry.  
I'd love to, but I'm afraid I can't make it./That's very nice of you, but ...  
Thanks for inviting me, but I can't come on ...

### Making, accepting, and declining a formal invitation

We would like to invite you to ...  
The Managers and Staff of InterX wish to invite you to ... (very formal)  
Thank you for your kind invitation.  
I would like to thank you for your kind invitation.  
I would be delighted to attend.  
Unfortunately, I am away on business at that time.  
I am afraid I shall be unable to attend.

## Making arrangements

### Suggesting a time/day

Would Tuesday afternoon at three o'clock suit you?  
Could you manage 10 a.m.?/Is five o'clock any good for you?  
Shall we say 1 p.m. for lunch?/What about 2 p.m. for the meeting?  
Are you free on Monday afternoon?/Do have any time on Monday?

### Making an alternative suggestion

If it's OK with you, I think I'd prefer to make it 10.30.  
2.30 would be better for me./Half past two would suit me better.  
Could we make it a little earlier/later? Say 3.30?

### Responding positively

OK, that sounds like a good idea./Yes, that's fine./That suits me fine./No problem.

### Responding negatively

I'm afraid 2 p.m. is going to be difficult./I'm not sure about three o'clock. I'll need to check .../I'm sorry, I can't make it on Wednesday./Ten o'clock is no good for me, I'm afraid.

### Giving an explanation

It looks as though I'm going to be busy all morning/afternoon./The problem is, I have to wait for someone at the airport./I'm afraid I've got another appointment then.

## Making and discussing initial suggestions on the phone

### Starting a phone call (and responses)

Hello, Frank speaking. How can I help? – Hello, Frank. This is Gina.  
How are things over there at the moment? – Quite busy./Fine.  
Good to talk to you at last. – You too.  
I don't think we've actually spoken before. – No, I don't think we have.

### Putting forward a proposal

Basically, what we want to do is .../It's early stages, but the plan is ...  
Now it's a question of thinking about ...  
The aim/plan/idea is to .../What we're thinking of doing is ...

### Asking for a response

We wanted to see what you thought.  
First I just wanted to see if you thought it had potential.  
In principle you think it's a good idea, it'll work?  
We thought there might be a possibility of ... Any thoughts?  
I'd really appreciate your advice on ...

### Giving a positive response

Sounds interesting./Tell me more.  
Oh definitely./Without doubt./I've got to say it all sounds very exciting.

### Giving a negative response

OK. I'm not really sure about that./I'm afraid I think ...

### Ending a phone call (and responses)

I don't want to keep you too long. – Don't worry, that's fine./Nice to talk to you. –  
And you./Give my regards to Jan. – OK./Certainly./Say hi to Diego for me. – Will do.

## Offering, accepting, and declining

### *Making an offer*

Do you want me to ... for you?  
I can ... if you like.  
I could do it if you're really stuck.  
I could give her a call if you want.  
It's yours if you want it.

I'll ... if you want.  
I'll buy you a drink some time.  
Shall I ... ?  
Would you like some help?  
Would you like to ... ?

### *Accepting an offer*

That'd be great./  
That would be really good.  
Please.

OK, I'll hold you to that.  
Thanks.  
Could you? Thanks.

### *Declining an offer*

It's very nice of you to ask, but ...  
It's not really my thing.  
I don't think I need that right now, thanks.  
No, it's all right./No, don't bother./That's kind, but no.

## Starting a working relationship

### *Phoning a contact*

You don't know me but I was given your name by a contact of mine.  
... said you might be able to help us.  
I'm sorry to call you out of the blue like this.

### *Introducing yourself*

This is ... from .../My name's ... and I work for an organization called ...  
We haven't met, so let me introduce myself.

### *Making requests and offers*

I'm wondering if you have ...  
I'm phoning/writing to see if you can help with another project.  
Would you be interested in helping us?  
I was wondering if you'd be interested.  
Could you ...?/Could you get back to me by the end of the week?  
Do you think you'll be free then?/Are you available then?

### *Responding to requests and offers*

Yes, I think so. It depends on a few things obviously.  
Yes, it sounds good. I think I'm definitely interested.  
That sounds really interesting.  
Have you got any information you can send me about what's involved?  
Ah, no. Sorry. I'm not available then.  
I tell you what: I know a couple of others who might be interested.

## Wrapping up and reviewing a project

### *Introducing the review*

I wanted to use this meeting to look back at the whole project ...  
I think that it's very important that we review ... thoroughly.

### *Reviewing positively*

My personal feeling is that it all went very well.  
We can all feel reasonably satisfied.

### *Learning lessons*

There are definitely lessons to be learnt from ...  
There were a few hiccups along the way, but ...  
We've learned a lot about how to do this in the future.  
You've all seen the reports and feedback.

### *Summing up*

In a nutshell, ...  
Taking all things into account, ...  
On the whole, ...  
Looking back on the whole experience, ...  
The bottom line is ...

### *Congratulating*

I also wanted to give special thanks to ... for ...  
Thanks and congratulations on doing such a good job.  
Thanks – not only for doing ..., but also for sorting out ...  
I'd like to congratulate everyone involved for ...  
Well done!  
I'd like to pass on my congratulations to all involved.  
I think we can feel proud of what we've achieved.  
You all did a really fantastic job.