

COMMUNICATION

# Self- improvement or leisure?

**LEVEL**

Intermediate (B2)

**NUMBER**

EN\_B2\_3121X

**LANGUAGE**

English



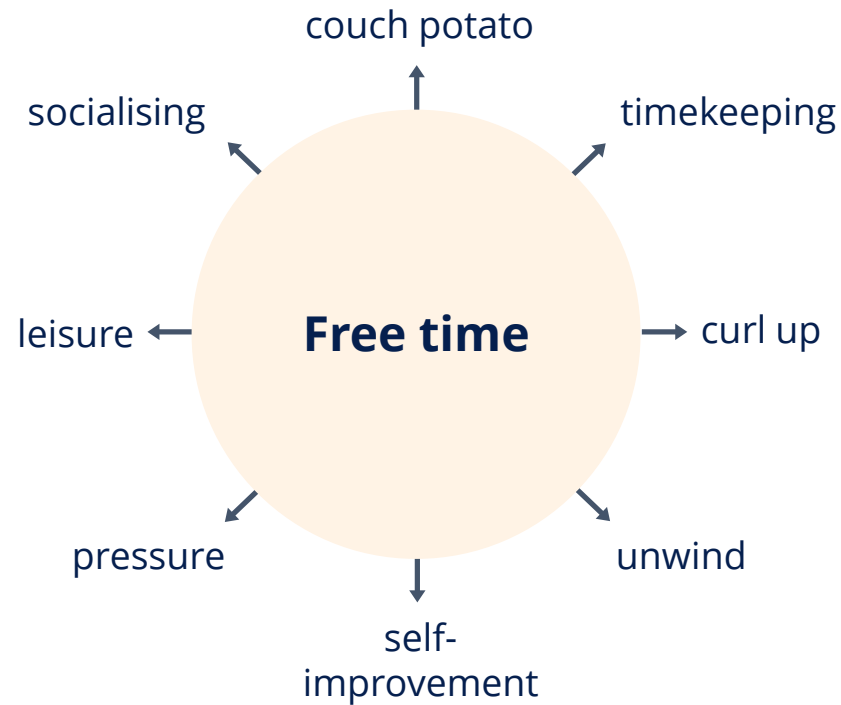
## Learning outcomes

- I can read and understand the main points in a short text about free time.
- I can discuss different ways to spend free time and identify my priorities.



# Warm-up

**Review** the vocabulary below. Can you think of any other vocabulary related to this theme?





# Warm-up

**Complete** the sentences with a word or phrase from the previous slide.

- 1 There's so much \_\_\_\_\_ on us at work, I find it hard to switch off and relax when I finish the day.
- 2 I think of my free time as an opportunity for \_\_\_\_\_. Socialising is fine every now and again, but I prioritise learning new things.
- 3 My favourite thing to do after a busy week at work is to \_\_\_\_\_ with a long hot bath!
- 4 My dog loves to \_\_\_\_\_ on the sofa next to me when I'm watching TV.
- 5 I need to become better at \_\_\_\_\_, because I'm always late for work on Monday mornings.



After a busy week at work, I **unwind** with a long, hot bath.

What is the literal meaning of **unwind**?

What does it mean in the example sentence?

Name three things you do to unwind.



# Reading

**Read** the text. **Answer** the questions.

Working life is stressful. Our day-to-day lives at work are often filled with deadlines, important business meetings, projects and pressure to meet targets by a certain time. As a result, many people prioritise using their free time for rest and relaxation. This might involve socialising, spending time with family and friends, trying out new restaurants, going shopping or to the cinema, or perhaps even a round of golf! For some people, however, time away from work is a prime opportunity for self-improvement. This might involve learning a new skill such as a foreign language or focusing on health and fitness. It's now easier than ever to gain access to classes and resources online that cater to a wide variety of interests.

How is **modern work culture** described in the text? Do you agree?

What **ways of spending free time** are mentioned in the text?

Are there any **words or phrases that are new** to you?



# Self-improvement or leisure?

**Read** the activities on the cards. **Answer** the questions below.

Language  
learning

Sewing

Cinema

Eating out

Gardening

Yoga

1. Would you classify these activities as leisure or self-improvement, or both?
2. Do you do any of these activities in your free time?



# Compare ways of spending free time

1

“Eating out in fancy restaurants and watching films is all very well but how does that help you advance in your career? I invest my free time in taking courses. I recently finished a course on coding, which will greatly improve my chances of promotion.”

2

“I need to switch off completely after a hard day or week of work. That often means curling up on the sofa with a takeaway and watching a series (or two!). In general, I like to spend my weekends relaxing on my own at home. The most productive thing I do on my weekends is to clean my apartment.”

Do you relate to either of these statements?

If so, which one?

Think of some pros and cons of the ways of spending free time described above.

Gather the pros and cons into a list.

Which description is the most appealing, based on this list?







# Share your top five

Read the list of activities. **Complete** the activity **in breakout rooms** or **as a class**.

## How do you spend your free time

Do any of these activities appeal to you? Which would be in your top five?

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> Playing sports                 | <b>6</b> Trying out new restaurants |
| <b>2</b> Watching TV                    | <b>7</b> Courses and workshops      |
| <b>3</b> Reading                        | <b>8</b> Trips away                 |
| <b>4</b> Online shopping                | <b>9</b> Visiting relatives         |
| <b>5</b> Cooking for friends and family | <b>10</b> Hiking                    |

1. Make a list of your **top five** activities out of the ones mentioned above.
2. Share your list with your classmates. Do you have similar interests?
3. Do you find it easy or difficult to **fit everything in**?



## Discuss

**How have your recreational activities changed in the last five years?**

**What are you enthusiastic about at the moment?**

**Do you need an incentive to do things?**

**If you could indulge in anything, what would it be and why?**

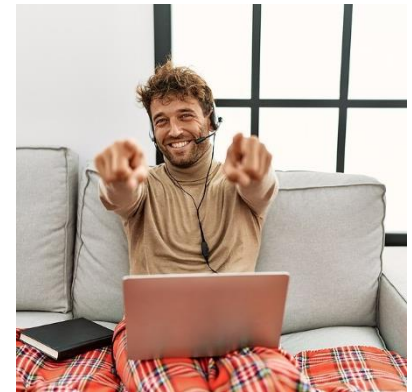
# Respond to the quote

“ **Certain people go so far as to think that activities that are purely relaxing are simply a waste of time.**

Do you know anyone with this mindset?

Can you think of arguments for and against this viewpoint?

What's your idea of wasting time?





# Giving advice

What **advice** would you give to the people in these situations?



*I'm so tired after work, I just want to watch TV but my partner says I'm being a couch potato and that we never do anything fun anymore.*

*I'm away on cycling trips most weekends. This is what brings me joy and helps me to destress from a busy job, but my family complains that they never see me.*

*Ever since I had my first child, I've found it impossible to make time for my own interests and hobbies.*



## **The importance of feeling fulfilled**

**What does it mean to feel fulfilled?**

**In terms of what you do with your free time,  
what makes you feel most fulfilled?**



# End of the lesson

Idiom

***to have (too much) time on your hands***

**Meaning:** If you have (too much) time on your hands, it means you have a lot of time and not a lot to do.

**Example:** Ask Jenny to help. It'll be good for her – she has too much time on her hands, if you ask me!





# Additional practice



# Ask your classmate

You've got to know your classmates a bit better, so maybe you can learn something from them! Ask a classmate for advice on **one** of the following topics, based on what you learned about them during the lesson.



Tips for making the most out of your free time

Best ways to switch off and unwind

How to learn new skills without it feeling like work

Finding quality time with family when you have a demanding job



# The impact of the internet on free time

**Use the topics** on the cards below to begin a discussion:  
How has the internet impacted these parts of your life?

Film, tv and  
music

Learning new  
skills

Contact with  
friends and  
family

Shopping and  
eating out





# Describe your ideal weekend

**Complete** the writing activity below.

What does your ideal weekend look like?  
Who do you spend it with and what do you do?

**Write** a paragraph outlining your dream weekend from start to finish.

**Share** your text in the chat.



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# Answer key

**P.4:** 1. pressure 2. self-improvement 3. unwind 4. curl up 5. timekeeping

**P.6:**

1. Modern work culture is described as stressful, with a focus on meeting deadlines, attending important business meetings, handling projects, and experiencing pressure to achieve targets within specific timeframes.
2. The text mentions various ways of spending free time, including socializing, spending time with family and friends, trying out new restaurants, going shopping or to the cinema, playing golf, learning new skills like a foreign language, and focusing on health and fitness through online classes and resources.



# Summary

## Self-improvement and leisure:

- *couch potato; timekeeping; to curl up; to unwind; self-improvement; pressure; leisure; socialising*
- *I love **curling up** with a good book in the evening.*
- *She takes a long hot bath to **unwind** after a stressful day.*

## Ways of spending time:

- *language learning; sewing; cinema; eating out; gardening; yoga*
- ***Eating out** in fancy restaurants and watching films is all very well but how does that help you advance in your career?*



# Vocabulary

couch potato

timekeeping

to curl up

to unwind

self-improvement

pressure

leisure

socialising





## Notes

