

Lingo Language Learning Tutor

AI Driven Robotic Head for Language Learning Assistance

Textbook for Pre-intermediate and Intermediate Levels

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Pre-intermediate Level

Grammar

Conjunctions: Contrast, Reason, Result & Time Connectors

This lesson explains how to use conjunctions (however, although, because, so) and time connectors (before, after, while, when, etc.) correctly in sentences.

Conjunctions help connect ideas and show relationships between clauses.

Time connectors help sequence events and show when actions happen.

Different connectors have specific punctuation rules and grammatical structures.

Common mistakes include wrong verb tenses and incorrect punctuation.

Usage Tips

- However = but (start new sentence)
- Although = despite (start/middle sentence)
- Because + clause, Because of + noun
- So = result (after comma)
- Use present (not future) after time connectors
- Comma when time connector begins sentence

Defining Relative Clauses

This lesson explains how to use defining relative clauses (who, which, where, that) to specify which person, thing or place we are talking about.

Defining relative clauses identify exactly which person, thing or place we mean.

Different relative pronouns are used for people, things/animals, and places.

These clauses provide essential information about the noun they modify.

There are common mistakes to avoid when forming these clauses.

Usage Tips

- Use 'who' for people, 'which' for things/animals, 'where' for places
- 'That' can replace 'who' or 'which' in defining clauses
- No commas are used in defining relative clauses
- The relative pronoun can often be omitted when it's the object
- Remember: Never use 'what' as a relative pronoun
- Avoid repeating the subject pronoun after the relative pronoun

Expressing Purpose with 'to' and 'for'

This lesson explains how to correctly use 'to + infinitive' and 'for + noun' to express purpose, including common mistakes to avoid.

We use 'to + infinitive' and 'for + noun' to talk about the purpose of an action.

'To + infinitive' shows why someone does something.

'For + noun' indicates the purpose or intended use of something.

There are important differences in usage between these structures, especially with -ing verbs.

Usage Tips

- Remember: 'to' + base verb (to buy, to eat, to study)
- Remember: 'for' + noun (for food, for fun, for exercise)
- Never use 'for + -ing' to explain why you do something
- You CAN use 'for + -ing' to explain what objects are used for
- When in doubt, 'to + infinitive' is usually correct for action purposes
- Both structures can often describe an object's function

Past Continuous: Form and Use

This lesson explains how to form and use the past continuous tense, including its contrast with the past simple tense.

The past continuous describes actions that were in progress at a specific moment in the past.

We often use it at the beginning of stories to set the scene.

The past continuous is typically used for longer background actions, while the past simple describes shorter completed actions.

The past simple is often used for actions that interrupt longer past continuous actions.

Positive form: was/were + verb-ing

I was studying at 9 p.m.

They were swimming at 7 in the morning.

Negative form: was/were not + verb-ing

She wasn't listening when I spoke.

We weren't working at that time.

Question form: Was/Were + subject + verb-ing

What were you doing at 9?

Was it raining when you left?

Actions in progress at specific moments

When I saw them yesterday, they were arguing.

At midday, they were still working.

Describing a scene/situation

It was getting dark, and I was walking fast. Suddenly...

The sun was shining and birds were singing.

Past continuous (long action) interrupted by past simple (short action)

He was playing football when he broke his arm.

When I went to bed, it was raining.

Contrast with past simple

We ate out yesterday. (completed action)

We were eating at 9. (action in progress)

When he arrived, she was having a shower. (shower started before)

When he arrived, she had a shower. (shower started after)

Usage Tips

- Remember the structure: was/were + verb-ing
- Use time expressions like 'at 9 a.m.', 'at midday', 'all morning' with past continuous
- The past continuous often sets the background scene in stories
- Short interrupting actions use past simple
- For sequential completed actions, use past simple
- Be careful with -ing spelling rules (e.g., run → running, write → writing)

Past Simple: Form and Use

This lesson covers the formation and usage of the past simple tense, including regular verb spelling rules and different contexts for use.

The past simple describes completed actions, past habits, and past situations.

Regular verbs form the past simple with -ed, while irregular verbs have unique forms.

We use past simple when we know or state when the action happened.

It's used for telling stories in chronological order and describing past routines.

Usage Tips

- Time expressions often used: yesterday, last week, in 2010, when I was young
- For irregular verbs, you must memorize the past forms (see → saw, go → went)
- In negatives and questions, use the base form after 'did'
- Use past simple for completed actions, not continuous ones
- For storytelling, use past simple for the main sequence of events

Present Continuous for Future Arrangements

This lesson explains how to use the present continuous tense to talk about future plans and arrangements, and compares it with 'be going to' and 'will'.

The present continuous can describe future arrangements when time and place are decided.

It's commonly used with travel verbs and meeting people, with future time expressions.

While similar to 'be going to', it emphasizes fixed arrangements rather than intentions.

'Will' remains the correct choice for instant decisions made at the moment of speaking.

Usage Tips

- Use present continuous only for arranged future events
- Always include future time references (tomorrow, at 5, etc.)
- Common verbs: meet, go, come, leave, arrive, have, see
- For unarranged personal plans, use 'be going to'
- For spontaneous decisions, use 'will'
- Never use present continuous for predictions

Present Simple vs Present Continuous

Comparative infographic showing forms, uses, and contrast between Present Simple and Present Continuous tenses.

present_simple

present_continuous

contrasts

present_simple
present_continuous
contrast

Usage Tips

- 3rd person -s: 'She works', NOT 'She work'
- Non-action verbs use simple form
- 'Now' usually signals continuous tense
- Frequency adverbs (always, usually) go before main verb

Subject Questions and Object Questions

Grammar diagram illustrating the structure of subject questions in English, contrasting correct and incorrect usage with examples.

In present and past simple, we don't use auxiliary verbs (do/does/did) when the question word is the subject.

For other tenses (continuous, perfect etc.), we include auxiliary verbs in subject questions.

Object questions follow normal question order: auxiliary verb + subject.

In informal English, prepositions go at the end of questions.

Subject Q: Who won the match? (NOT Who did win the match?)
Subject Q: What happened last night?
Subject Q (other tenses): Who is cooking dinner?
Object Q: Who did Jack call?
Preposition Q: Who did you play tennis with?
Preposition Q: What company do you work for?

Usage Tips

- Subject questions = no auxiliary in simple tenses
- Object questions = follow normal QWASM order
- Prepositions go at the end in spoken English

Will vs Be Going To: Future Forms

This lesson explains the differences between 'will' and 'be going to' for expressing future actions, focusing on predictions and decisions.

Both 'will' and 'be going to' can express future actions but with different meanings.

'Will' is used for predictions based on opinion and instant decisions.

'Be going to' is used for predictions based on evidence and pre-made plans.

The choice between them depends on the context and the speaker's intention.

Usage Tips

- Use 'will' when you're making a promise, offer, or instant decision
- Use 'be going to' when you can see the future event coming (evidence)
- For personal plans you've already made, use 'be going to'
- In informal speech, 'going to' often becomes 'gonna'
- Remember: 'will' doesn't change form ('he will', not 'he wills')
- Negative forms: 'won't' vs 'not going to'

Much, Many, Little, Few, Some, Any

Informative grammar chart explaining the use of quantifiers 'much, many, little, few, some, any' with distinctions between countable and uncountable nouns, and usage examples for A2 English level.

We use 'many' before plural (countable) nouns and 'much' before uncountable nouns. They are used in negative sentences and questions, not normally in affirmative sentences.

We can use 'too much' and 'too many' in affirmative sentences.

'How much' and 'how many' are used to ask about quantity.

'A lot of' and 'lots of' are used with both countable and uncountable nouns, mainly in positive sentences.

Always use 'a lot of' or 'lots of' with 'of' before a noun. At the end of a sentence, use 'a lot' or 'lots' without 'of'.

'Few' is used before plural countable nouns; 'little' and 'a bit of' before uncountable nouns.

'A few' and 'a little' mean 'some, enough'; 'few' and 'little' mean 'not enough'.

We use 'some' in affirmative sentences and 'any' in negative and question forms.

Both 'some' and 'any' can be used with countable plural and uncountable nouns. For countable, use the plural form.

Use 'some' in interrogative sentences when offering or requesting something.

There isn't much coffee in the jar.
Were there many people at the party?
There's too much salt in the soup.
You eat too many biscuits.
How many concerts have you ever been to?
How much coffee have you had today?
She spends a lot of time watching TV.
We had lots of good moments together.
I like her a lot.
He always gets good results with very little effort.
Can you put a bit of sugar in the tea?
There's little milk in the fridge; we have to buy more.
There are a few in the fridge.
Do you speak English? – No, I speak very little English.

Do you speak English? – Yes, I speak a little English.
Is there any sugar in the cupboard?
Have you got any new friends?
I have some questions to ask you.
Would you like some help?
Can I have some tea, please?

Usage Tips

- Use 'many' with plural countable nouns, 'much' with uncountable nouns (mainly in negatives/questions).
- 'Too much'/'too many' are used in affirmative sentences.
- 'How much'/'how many' ask about quantity.
- 'A lot of' and 'lots of' are used with both noun types, mostly in positives.
- 'Few/little' without 'a' mean 'not enough'; with 'a' they mean 'some/enough'.
- Use 'some' in affirmative, 'any' in negative and question forms.
- 'Some' is also used for offers and polite requests in questions.

Past Continuous: Form and Use

This lesson explains the formation and usage of the past continuous tense, including its contrast with the past simple and how to describe ongoing past actions.

The past continuous describes actions that were in progress at a specific moment in the past.

We often use it to set the scene at the beginning of a story or to describe interrupted actions.

The past continuous is typically used for longer background actions, while the past simple describes shorter, completed actions.

Positive form of past continuous

I was studying at 9 p.m.

They were arguing when I saw them.

Negative form of past continuous

I wasn't watching TV at that time.

They weren't listening to the teacher.

Question form of past continuous

What were you doing at 9?

Were they working all morning?

Actions in progress at specific moments

They were swimming at 7 in the morning.

At midday, they were still working.

Describing a scene

It was getting dark, and I was walking fast. Suddenly...

The sun was shining and birds were singing when I woke up.

Past continuous for longer background actions

When I met Susan, she was having a drink.

We didn't go out because it was raining.

Past simple interrupting past continuous

He was playing football when he broke his arm.

When I went to bed, it was raining.

Contrast with past simple

When he arrived, she was having a shower. (shower started before)

When he arrived, she had a shower. (shower started after)

Usage Tips

- Remember the structure: was/were + verb-ing
- Use time expressions (at 9, all morning, when...) to specify when the action was in progress
- The past continuous often describes the 'background situation' while the past simple describes the 'main events'
- When telling stories, use past continuous to set the scene at the beginning

Past Simple: Form and Use

This lesson explains the formation and usage of the past simple tense, including regular verb spelling rules and different contexts for using the past simple.

The past simple is used to talk about completed actions, past habits, situations that were true in the past, and events in chronological order.

Regular verbs form the past simple by adding '-ed' to the base form, with specific spelling rules depending on the verb ending.

The past simple has different structures for positive, negative, and question forms.

Positive form of past simple

I saw Jim yesterday.

She moved to Chester three years ago.

Negative form of past simple

We didn't go out last Saturday.

She didn't work as a teacher.

Question form of past simple

Did you see the movie?

When did they arrive?

Completed actions in the past

I finished my homework an hour ago.

They visited Paris last summer.

Past habits

She washed her hair every day.

I often played in the park when we were children.

Situations that were true in the past

My grandfather had two brothers.

He lived with my grandparents as a child.

Events in chronological order

When I arrived home, I took off my shoes and then I relaxed on the sofa.

Usage Tips

- Remember the spelling rules for regular verbs: add '-ed' to most verbs, '-d' to verbs ending in 'e', and double the final consonant for some verbs before adding '-ed'.
- Use the past simple when you know or mention when the action happened.
- For irregular verbs, you need to memorize the past simple forms as they don't follow regular patterns.

Vocabulary

Clothes

Vocabulary for different types of clothing, footwear, and accessories, including verbs used when talking about clothes.

Introduction

In this pre-intermediate vocabulary lesson on clothes, you will explore various types of clothing, footwear, and accessories. Pay attention to the definitions and examples and take a close look at the accompanying pictures to understand better these everyday items.

Verbs used to talk about clothes

There are several verbs that we use when talking about clothes, footwear, and accessories.

wear:

Example: Sara is wearing a new dress.

carry:

Example: Why are you carrying an umbrella?

match:

Example: Your orange socks match your orange shirt.

go well:

Example: Pink and green go well together.

Types of clothes

Common clothing items and their descriptions.

T-shirt:

Example: In the summer, I usually wear a T-shirt and jeans.

blouse:

Example: Janet wore a white blouse and a smart skirt to the meeting.

blazer:

Example: Lucy was wearing a smart green blazer with her trousers.

cardigan:

Example: It was cool in the house, so I put on my cardigan.

skirt:

Example: Our school uniform consists of a grey skirt and a blue blazer.

leggings:

Example: I think leggings are more comfortable than jeans.

raincoat:

Example: It's supposed to rain this evening, so I'll wear my raincoat.

tracksuit:

Example: Peter went running in his tracksuit.

hoodie:

Example: I pulled the hood up on my hoodie to keep my ears warm.

polo shirt:

Example: Most of the men wore polo shirts to watch the match.

pyjamas/pajamas:

Example: Before I read you a bedtime story, you must put on your pyjamas.

swimsuit:

Example: We have swimming after school tomorrow, so I have to bring my swimsuit.

Footwear

Different types of shoes and footwear.

sneakers/trainers:

Example: If you're going to go jogging, you need to wear trainers.

flip-flops:

Example: When I go to the beach, I wear my flip-flops.

shoes:

Example: After putting on my socks, I put on my shoes.

sandals:

Example: In summer, I wear sandals instead of heavy shoes.

high heels:

Example: It is difficult to walk in my high heels.

Jewellery and accessories

Common accessories and jewellery items.

watch:

Example: I checked my watch to see what the time was.

handbag:

Example: Mary took her phone out of her handbag.

gloves:

Example: My hands were cold because I wasn't wearing gloves.

scarf:

Example: I always use a scarf in winter to protect my neck from the cold.

hat:

Example: Your ears will get cold if you don't wear a hat.

sunglasses:

Example: It was a bright sunny day, so I was wearing my sunglasses.

cap:

Example: I wore a cap to the beach to protect my face from the sun.

belt:

Example: I need to wear a belt with these jeans because they're too big.

bracelet:

Example: Jenny was wearing a silver bracelet.

necklace:

Example: The only jewellery I wear is this silver necklace.

earrings:

Example: Maria was wearing a pair of elegant silver earrings.

Common Phrasal Verbs

Essential phrasal verbs frequently used in daily life, with definitions and example sentences.

Introduction

In this Pre-intermediate Vocabulary Lesson about Common Phrasal Verbs, you will learn essential phrasal verbs that we often use in our daily lives. Check the following pictures and look at the definitions and sentence examples below.

Phrasal Verbs

Common phrasal verbs with their meanings and usage examples.

put on: to place clothes or make-up on your body

Example: Before going outside, I put on my boots.

take off: to remove something you're wearing

Example: I was hot, so I took off my jacket.

turn on: to activate a device or equipment

Example: I turned on the radio so I could listen to the news.

turn off: to deactivate a device or equipment

Example: Please turn off the heating when you leave the house.

break down: when a machine stops working

Example: My car broke down while I was driving to work.

break up: to end a romantic relationship

Example: Sally and Tom broke up last week.

bring back: to return something to its original place

Example: As soon as I've finished these books, I'll bring them back to the library.

get up: to rise from bed or from sitting

Example: I usually get up early during the week.

get along: to have a friendly relationship

Example: My cousin and I get along well, and we enjoy spending time together.

give back: to return something borrowed

Example: If you lend me your dress, I'll give it back to you tomorrow.

give up: to stop doing or having something

Example: I'm trying to give up chocolate because it's making me fat.

go on: to continue doing something

Example: We went on dancing until midnight. Experts think the war will go on for a long time.

hang out: to spend time with someone

Example: Tim and I usually hang out at the park after school.

look after: to take care of someone or something

Example: I'm looking after my little sister tonight because my parents are going out.

look for: to search for something

Example: I'm looking for my glasses. Have you seen them?

pick up: to lift something from a surface

Example: I picked up the pencil that I had dropped on the floor.

run out of: to use all of something so none remains

Example: I had to go to the shop because we had run out of bread.

take out: to remove something from its place

Example: Before going to bed, I took out the rubbish.

throw away: to discard something

Example: After finishing the last biscuit, I threw away the packet.

work out: to exercise

Example: I work out at the gym twice a week.

Describing People's Appearance

Adjectives and phrases for describing physical appearance, including height, build, hair, and distinctive features.

Introduction

In this lesson, you will learn how to use certain adjectives and words to describe people's physical appearance. We'll cover height, build, hair characteristics, and other distinctive features.

Height and Build

Terms to describe a person's height and body type:

tall:

Example: My brother is very tall - he's 6 feet 3 inches.

short:

Example: She's quite short compared to her classmates.

medium height:

Example: Most people in my family are of medium height.

slim:

Example: The dancer had a slim, graceful figure.

thin:

Example: He became very thin after his illness.

overweight:

Example: The doctor said I'm slightly overweight.

fit:

Example: You can tell he's fit from his muscular arms.

curvy:

Example: Many models today have curvy bodies.

petite:

Example: My petite sister wears size small clothes.

Hair

Describing hair by length, shape and color (in this order: length > shape > color):

long straight hair:

Example: She has long straight black hair.

short curly hair:

Example: The boy with short curly hair is my cousin.

medium-length wavy hair:

Example: I prefer medium-length wavy hairstyles.

blonde:

Example: Many Scandinavian people have naturally blonde hair.

brunette:

Example: The brunette woman is our new manager.

Other Features

Additional terms for describing distinctive appearance features:

wear glasses:

Example: Does your father wear glasses?

a beard:

Example: He grew a beard during his vacation.

a moustache:

Example: The man with a moustache is my uncle.

wrinkles:

Example: His face showed wrinkles from years of smiling.

freckles:

Example: The child had cute freckles across her nose.

Asking About Appearance

Common phrases for describing and asking about physical appearance:

What does he/she look like?:

Example: 'What does your new teacher look like?' 'She's tall with short brown hair.'

[height] tall:

Example: My sister is five feet six inches tall.

weigh [amount]:

Example: The athlete weighs 180 pounds.

Describing People's Personality

Adjectives for describing personality traits, including positive characteristics and negative/neutral qualities.

Introduction

In this lesson, you will learn how to describe different types of people using simple personality adjectives. We'll cover both positive traits and negative/neutral characteristics.

Positive Adjectives

Words to describe favorable personality traits:

friendly:

Example: Anna was friendly and welcomed me to the class.

kind:

Example: The kind lady offered to drive me home.

generous:

Example: The generous old man left the waiter a \$20 tip.

optimistic:

Example: Tom is so optimistic; he always sees the bright side of things.

reliable:

Example: Sue is a reliable person; she always keeps her promises.

responsible:

Example: Sam is very responsible, so I trust him with my children.

cheerful:

Example: Harry is always cheerful, even when things go wrong.

outgoing:

Example: Mary is so outgoing; she loves going to parties.

easygoing:

Example: Joe is so easygoing. Nothing ever seems to bother him.

hardworking:

Example: Tony is one of the most hardworking people I've met.

Negative or Neutral Adjectives

Words to describe less favorable personality traits:

pessimistic:

Example: Peter is so pessimistic; he makes me see the negative side.

unfriendly:

Example: Ken was unfriendly and didn't make me feel welcome.

rude:

Example: The rude shop assistant took my money without speaking.

mean:

Example: Little Henry cried when the mean boys took his ball.

unreliable:

Example: Sally lost her job because she was unreliable.

irresponsible:

Example: I don't trust Tim alone at home. He's too irresponsible.

miserable:

Example: I wish Dan would smile more. He always looks miserable.

shy:

Example: Jerry is a shy boy and rarely speaks in class.

lazy:

Example: Sara's lazy husband sits on the sofa all day.

Usage Tips

Important notes about using personality adjectives:

Be + adjective:

Example: She is kind. / They are outgoing.

Seem + adjective:

Example: He seems shy at first, but he's actually very friendly.

Become + adjective:

Example: After the accident, Tom became more pessimistic.

Housework

Vocabulary for common household chores and tasks, including differences between 'make' and 'do' when talking about housework.

Introduction

In this A2 pre-intermediate English Vocabulary lesson, you will learn about housework or household chores. They are terms that we use to describe the jobs that we do to keep our homes clean and running efficiently. Most of us do these chores on a daily or weekly basis.

Household Chores

Common tasks we do to maintain our homes, with definitions and examples.

sweep the floor:

Example: After I've swept the floor, I'll mop it.

mop the floor:

Example: After I've swept the floor, I'll mop it.

vacuum/h Hoover:

Example: I couldn't hear the radio because Maria was vacuuming.

dust:

Example: I stood on a chair to dust the high shelves.

wash:

Example: Joe washes his car every Saturday.

do the washing up/do the dishes:

Example: It's your turn to do the washing up; I did it yesterday.

do the laundry:

Example: I do my laundry twice a week.

clean:

Example: When I finish cleaning the windows, I'll clean the bathroom mirrors.

iron:

Example: Anna is ironing her husband's shirts.

take out the trash/rubbish:

Example: Before I go to bed, I'll take out the trash.

set the table:

Example: Mum asked me to set the table.

clear the table:

Example: Let me help you clear the table.

make the bed:

Example: Before I go to school, I make my bed.

tidy up:

Example: You must tidy up (your room) before you leave.

water the plants:

Example: I water the plants in my kitchen twice a week.

make breakfast/lunch/dinner:

Example: Will you make dinner?

make tea/coffee:

Example: I'm making coffee. Do you want a cup?

do chores:

Example: Children who do chores learn responsibility.

do the shopping:

Example: I usually do the shopping every Monday after work.

walk the dog:

Example: I walk the dog every evening in the park.

Make vs Do

The verbs make and do are often used to talk about housework. Make is basically used to mean 'cook' or 'prepare' something in the kitchen, although we also say make the bed. The verb do is more often used with tasks, jobs or chores in general.

In a Hotel

Vocabulary related to hotel accommodations, services, and common phrases used when staying at a hotel.

Introduction

In this Pre-intermediate Vocabulary Lesson about Hotels, you will learn the different types of rooms and accommodations available, what amenities and services you can expect, and useful verb phrases to use at a hotel. Check the pictures and read the definitions and examples below.

Types of rooms and accommodation

Different room types and meal plan options available in hotels.

single room: a room with a single bed for one person

Example: I stayed in a single room with just a narrow bed and a desk in it.

double room: a room with a double bed for two people

Example: Lucy and Fred booked a double room with a huge bed in the middle of it.

twin room: a room with two single beds for two people

Example: The children slept in a twin room right next to their parents' room.

sea view: a room with a view of the sea

Example: I stayed in a big room with a sea view.

half board: includes breakfast and one meal (usually dinner) in the room price

Example: We only booked half board because we wanted to try different places to eat.

full board: includes all meals in the room price

Example: As we'd booked full board, we ate all our meals in the hotel restaurant.

Places and services in a hotel

Common facilities and services offered by hotels.

reception desk/front desk: the main desk where guests check in and get information

Example: I waited at the reception desk to ask for some information.

room service: food and drinks delivered to your room

Example: It was too cold to go outside, so I called room service and ordered a sandwich.

housekeeping: room cleaning and maintenance service

Example: The housekeeping service was excellent, and the rooms were cleaned each day.

spa: facility offering beauty treatments and relaxation services

Example: I spent an hour in the spa getting a relaxing massage.

conference room: large room for meetings and events

Example: The company had booked the conference room for their three-day national conference.

internet access: Wi-Fi connection available in the hotel

Example: I need a room with internet access, so that I can work and have video calls.

laundry service: clothes washing service provided by the hotel

Example: I used the laundry service to have my shirt cleaned.

parking facilities: space available for guests to park their cars

Example: Unless the hotel has parking facilities, we won't be able to take the car.

wake-up call: phone call from reception to wake you at a specified time

Example: Tom requested a wake-up call for 7 am the next day.

Verb Phrases

Common verbs and phrases used when staying at a hotel.

book a room: to reserve a hotel room

Example: I booked the room online as soon as I'd finished booking our flights.

check in: to register your arrival at the hotel

Example: As soon as we arrived, we checked in at the reception desk.

check out: to leave the hotel after paying your bill

Example: We were told we would have to check out of the hotel by 11:30 at the latest.

pay the bill: to settle your payment for the stay

Example: I paid the bill at the reception desk before leaving the hotel.

request: to ask for something politely

Example: Peter was feeling hungry, so he called the reception desk to request room service.

Shops and Shopping

Words and phrases related to different types of shops, shopping experiences, and common shopping interactions.

Introduction

In this lesson, you will learn different words and phrases related to shops and shopping. Check the following pictures and look at the descriptions and sentence examples below.

Places for shopping

There are many places we can go to when we want to do some shopping. Here is a list of some of the most common ones.

shop/store:

Example: There's a shop opposite my office that sells shoes and bags.

department store:

Example: I entered the department store and went up to the men's clothing section.

supermarket:

Example: All the fruit and vegetables in the supermarket were very expensive.

shopping centre/mall:

Example: There are 80 shops and 9 restaurants in the new shopping centre.

market:

Example: I buy my vegetables from the outdoor market in the town square.

In a shop

Common terms used when inside a shop or store.

cashier:

Example: The customer paid the cashier for her tomatoes.

customer:

Example: The customer paid the cashier for her tomatoes.

cash register:

Example: After I paid the cashier, he put the money in the cash register.

sales assistant:

Example: Darling, can you ask the sales assistant if they have this in a smaller size?

sale:

Example: The shop was having a sale. Everything was 50% off.

discount:

Example: There is a 25% discount on all books until the end of the month.

price:

Example: The price of the items is always written on your receipt.

receipt:

Example: The price of the items is always written on your receipt.

refund:

Example: You will only get a refund if you show the cashier your receipt.

purchase:

Example: Before I purchased the dress, I tried it on in the fitting room.

try something on:

Example: Before I purchased the dress, I tried it on in the fitting room.

fitting room:

Example: Before I purchased the dress, I tried it on in the fitting room.

window shopping:

Example: Do you want to go to the shopping centre and do some window shopping?

pay by card/in cash:

Example: Sorry, you can't pay in cash. We only accept cards.

sold out:

Example: I wanted to buy that new toy, but it's already sold out.

Useful language when you go shopping

Common phrases used in shopping situations, especially for clothes.

Flashcards

After completing the exercises in this lesson on Shops and Shopping, you can use the unit's Vocabulary Flashcards to revise and help you memorize the terms.

The Weather

Vocabulary for describing different weather conditions, temperature, humidity, and weather phenomena.

Introduction

In this Pre-intermediate Vocabulary Lesson about The Weather, you will learn about different weather conditions, how to describe them in English, and the vocabulary associated with various weather phenomena. The pictures, descriptions, and examples below will help you understand and remember the terms.

Weather Adjectives

Common adjectives used to describe weather conditions, often formed by adding -y to nouns.

sunny:

Example: On sunny days, we like to go to the park.

cloudy:

Example: It was very cloudy, so we couldn't see the sun.

rainy:

Example: It was a rainy day, so we decided to stay indoors.

snowy:

Example: On snowy days like this, we like to play in the snow.

windy:

Example: It was so windy in the park that my papers blew away.

Temperature

Vocabulary related to temperature measurements and descriptions.

degrees:

Example: They are expecting the temperature to go up to 30 degrees tomorrow.

hot:

Example: It was too hot at the beach, so we decided to go home.

warm:

Example: On warm days like this, we like to spend time outdoors.

cold:

Example: It was a cold day, so I was wearing a hat and gloves.

freezing:

Example: It's absolutely freezing out here! I need to go inside.

Humidity

Terms describing moisture levels in the air.

humid:

Example: The humid weather made walking long distances uncomfortable.

wet:

Example: It had rained and everything was very wet.

dry:

Example: It hasn't rained in a long time and the ground is very dry.

Weather Phenomena

Vocabulary for different weather events and conditions.

lightning:

Example: The lightning lit up the whole sky during the storm.

thunder:

Example: Every time there was thunder, the dog hid under the bed.

thunderstorm:

Example: There was a thunderstorm last night with lots of heavy rain and lightning.

snowstorm:

Example: We are expecting a snowstorm this evening.

shower:

Example: We are expecting showers this morning, so I am going to stay indoors.

drizzle:

Example: There was a bit of drizzle when I walked to work this morning.

hail:

Example: We were surprised to see balls of hail on the roof of our car.

Towns and Cities

Vocabulary for describing towns and cities, including common buildings and places, and adjectives used to characterize urban areas.

Introduction

In this pre-intermediate vocabulary lesson about Towns and Cities, you will learn essential adjectives used to describe towns or cities and different nouns for common places you can find in them. The pictures, descriptions, and examples below will help you understand and remember the terms.

Common buildings and places

Vocabulary for different locations found in towns and cities.

park:

Example: An area with trees and grass that is open to the public.

library:

Example: A place that is open to the public where you can go and borrow books.

museum:

Example: A building where historical objects are exhibited.

market:

Example: An open place or building with different stands that sell vegetables, meat, fish, food, and other things.

shopping centre:

Example: A large building or area with many different shops, restaurants, etc.

post office:

Example: A building where you can buy stamps and send letters.

town hall:

Example: A building that is used by the local government.

church:

Example: A religious building where Christians go to pray.

mosque:

Example: A religious building where Muslims go to pray.

castle:

Example: A large building with high walls used to protect people from attack.

statue:

Example: An image of a person or animal that is made of stone or other materials.

tourist attraction:

Example: Something like a monument, famous building, or museum that tourists like to see when they visit a town or city.

suburb:

Example: A residential area on the edge of a city.

factory:

Example: A large building or group of buildings where machines are used to make goods, e.g., cars, toys, boxes, etc.

car park:

Example: An area where people can leave their cars.

downtown:

Example: I like to do my shopping downtown. I live in the suburbs but I work downtown. I have an office in downtown Los Angeles.

Adjectives for describing towns and cities

Words used to characterize urban areas.

busy/crowded:

Example: The shopping centre is a busy place, especially on a Saturday. The centre of London is always crowded.

lively/vibrant:

Example: Soho is a vibrant area with lots of popular bars.

peaceful/quiet:

Example: The park is a peaceful place where I often go to relax.

modern:

Example: All the buildings in the city are very modern.

historical:

Example: The city centre is full of historical buildings.

multicultural/cosmopolitan:

Example: It's a multicultural area, home to residents of many different nationalities.

safe:

Example: My city is a safe place to live, which is one of the reasons I enjoy living there.

dangerous:

Example: It's quite a dangerous area, so I would avoid it if you can.

touristy:

Example: Our hotel was in a touristy area, minutes away from museums and tourist attractions.

picturesque:

Example: It's a beautiful part of town with lots of picturesque buildings and shops.

industrial:

Example: It's an industrial area, home to many car factories.

residential:

Example: She's just bought a house in a quiet residential area.

Words with Prepositions

Common combinations of adjectives and verbs with specific prepositions, with example sentences to aid learning.

Introduction

Prepositions typically come before nouns or pronouns, helping to express aspects like time, location, direction, and more within a sentence. In English, some adjectives and verbs are commonly used with certain prepositions. Learning these combinations helps you express ideas more accurately.

Adjectives + Prepositions

Some adjectives are usually followed by specific prepositions. Learning example sentences helps you remember these combinations better.

good at:

Example: Tom is good at football.

surprised at:

Example: I was surprised at the news.

interested in:

Example: Alice is interested in art.

excited about:

Example: We are excited about our holiday.

disappointed with:

Example: I was disappointed with our meal.

Verbs + Prepositions

Many verbs are followed by specific prepositions. Example sentences help you understand and remember their correct usage.

arrive in:

Example: We arrived in Rome yesterday.

arrive at:

Example: I arrived at the station at noon.

ask for:

Example: I asked the man for directions.

invite to:

Example: They didn't invite us to the party.

wait for:

Example: I'm waiting for Tom.

spend on:

Example: We spent all the money on a trip.

Vocabulary Chart

A quick-reference chart of common adjective and verb + preposition combinations with examples.

interested in:

Example: He's interested in science.

angry with:

Example: She's angry with her brother.

depend on:

Example: We depend on our teachers.

laugh at:

Example: They laughed at my joke.

good at:

Example: She is good at cooking.

Reading

Black Friday

America's Biggest Shopping Day

The day after Thanksgiving has become America's biggest shopping day. Closed all day on Thursday, shopping centres all across the nation open early on Friday. Some of them open at 12:01 Friday morning, while others open at 4 a.m. Some 'sleepyhead' shopping centres, like Target this year, don't open their doors on Friday until 6 a.m. From Friday to the day before Christmas, this is the season when businesses make nearly 25 per cent of what they earn in a year. This season puts many businesses 'in the black', that is, they make the money they need for the year.

Eager Shoppers

Reporters from local TV stations interview people who sleep in tents in front of the shops a day or two before the doors open on Friday. These people patiently wait in queue to get products that are 50 per cent cheaper or more. 'Oh, we have fun,' said one of the persons queuing. 'We sometimes bring games to play, we watch TV and order lots of pizza, and we often meet interesting people. And, most important of all, we save a lot!' The problem, of course, is that only a very small number of products have big reductions in their prices. Apart from a few big discounts, each shop has other things that are reduced from 10 to 50 per cent, saving shoppers from \$10 to \$400 per item, and so Americans want to go shopping.

Criticism of Black Friday

Not all Americans enjoy shopping. Reverend William Graham wants to change Black Friday's name. 'We want to call it Remember Jesus Friday. People should start the season with the right attitude. Christmas has become a Season of Shopping. We want to make it a Season of Giving. And we don't mean giving material things. We mean giving your back, your mind, and your hands. Help an old lady clean up her house. Teach a kid how to read. Visit sick people in the hospital or in nursing homes. Give food to the Red Cross. Celebrate Christmas by remembering Jesus and forgetting Santa Claus.'

Comprehension Questions

Q1: When does Black Friday happen?

- A. The day before Thanksgiving
- B. The day after Thanksgiving
- C. The first Friday in December
- D. The last Friday before Christmas

Q2: What time do some stores open on Black Friday?

- A. 12:01 Friday morning
- B. 6 p.m. Thursday
- C. 9 a.m. Friday
- D. Noon Friday

Q3: What does 'in the black' mean for businesses?

- A. They lose money
- B. They make needed profits
- C. They close early
- D. They get government help

Q4: How do some shoppers prepare for Black Friday?

- A. Sleep in tents outside stores
- B. Make shopping lists
- C. Save money all year
- D. Research products online

Q5: What do shoppers NOT mention doing while waiting in line?

- A. Playing games
- B. Watching TV
- C. Eating pizza
- D. Shopping online

Q6: What percentage discount do most Black Friday products offer?

- A. 5-10%
- B. 10-50%
- C. 50-75%
- D. 75-90%

Q7: What does Reverend Graham want to change about Black Friday?

- A. The date
- B. The name
- C. The discounts
- D. The opening times

Q8: What does Reverend Graham suggest people should give?

- A. Expensive gifts
- B. Material things
- C. Their time and help

D. Money to churches

Q9: Which activity does Reverend Graham NOT mention as good giving?

- A. Helping clean houses
- B. Teaching children
- C. Visiting the sick
- D. Buying presents

Q10: What is the main criticism of Christmas in the text?

- A. It's too religious
- B. It's too commercial
- C. It's too expensive
- D. It's too short

How My Life Has Changed

Life Before

I used to work on cruise ships as a musician. I travelled a lot! I spent the month before the first lockdown in four continents! I used to get up really early, drive to the airport and fly to a port across the world and get on a ship just to get to work! Then I used to spend between three and fourteen days on the ship. The ships were great. The food was excellent, and the staff were brilliant. The ship stopped at fantastic places, and I often used to spend the afternoon at the beach drinking cocktails or sightseeing. But there were disadvantages too. I often didn't know anyone on the ship. But the passengers all knew me, and they used to talk to me every time I left my cabin. I didn't have any privacy. Of course, I had to chat to them politely even when I wasn't in the mood.

Life Now

But now, everything has changed. The cruises aren't running now, and I don't know when they will run again, and I've been in my flat for a year. I never used to spend much time here, and I haven't spent a whole year in England for over twenty years! But I've enjoyed it. I bought a bike last year, and I've found some great beach cafes that I never used to know about. I also bought a campervan, and I drove around the coast. I always used to prefer beaches in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean to British beaches. The weather is much better for a start! But I found some beautiful places last year. I could park on the beach in some places and run straight into the sea! They were much less touristy and more peaceful than the places where the cruise ships go.

Changing Relationships

I'm spending a lot more time alone now. I didn't use to be alone much when I was working. But since the pandemic started, I have developed new relationships with people who I didn't use to know very well. I always used to prefer the company of entertainers and people who like to travel. I used to think that people with normal jobs were boring. But since last year, I've got to know some really interesting, strong, kind and caring people! So that's been really valuable.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: What was the writer's job before?

- A. Teacher
- B. Musician
- C. Pilot
- D. Chef

Q2: How many continents did the writer visit before the first lockdown?

- A. Two
- B. Three
- C. Four
- D. Five

Q3: What was a disadvantage of working on cruise ships?

- A. Bad food
- B. No privacy
- C. Long working hours
- D. Dangerous places

Q4: How long has the writer been in their flat?

- A. Six months
- B. One year
- C. Two years
- D. Five years

Q5: What did the writer buy last year?

- A. A bike and a car
- B. A bike and a campervan
- C. A boat and a bike
- D. A house and a car

Q6: What did the writer used to think about British beaches?

- A. They were the best
- B. They were better than Caribbean beaches
- C. They were not as good as Caribbean beaches
- D. They were too cold

Q7: What did the writer discover about some British beaches?

- A. They were very touristy
- B. They were peaceful
- C. They were dangerous
- D. They had no facilities

Q8: How has the writer's social life changed?

- A. They spend more time alone
- B. They go to more parties
- C. They travel more with friends
- D. They work more hours

Q9: What kind of people did the writer used to prefer?

- A. People with normal jobs
- B. Entertainers and travelers
- C. Quiet people
- D. Older people

Q10: How does the writer feel about their new relationships?

- A. They are boring
- B. They are valuable
- C. They are difficult
- D. They are temporary

The Edinburgh Festival

Introduction

One of the most popular summer festivals in the UK is the Edinburgh Festival. It isn't actually one festival; eight festivals are held in the city simultaneously, including the Art Festival, the Book Festival, the International Festival, the Fringe and the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

History

The Edinburgh Festival has happened in August every year since 1947, except for 2020. The idea for a festival came from Rudolf Bing, an Austrian who loved and sponsored the arts. Bing was the general manager of the famous Opera House at Glyndebourne in the South of England. He wanted to organise an international festival of music and opera to help fund the Opera House. Different cities were considered, including Oxford, but finally, Edinburgh, which already had a long history of festivals, was chosen.

The First Year

Two important events took place during the first International Festival. Firstly, a week-long film festival was organised by the Edinburgh Film Guild. Secondly, eight theatre groups arrived uninvited. They were not allowed to perform in the International Festival, so they set up their shows in other venues in the city. That became the 'Edinburgh Festival Fringe'.

The Fringe Festival

The Fringe Festival is now the largest of the festivals. In 2018, it featured more than 55,000 performances of 3,548 different shows in 317 venues. There are circus, music, dance, comedy, theatre performances and much more. Comedy is the most common performance: over a third of the shows are comedy.

Military Festival

A popular event of the Military Festival is the Tattoo. It takes place at the castle each night. Military musicians from across the world perform, and there is a great light and fireworks display. Another popular event is its grand finale: a classical music concert in Princes Street Gardens, when fireworks shoot into the sky, in time to the music.

Tips for Visitors

Attending the festival is a great experience, but planning ahead is a good idea. Hundreds of thousands of people attend each year, so you'll need to book accommodation and tickets for popular shows in advance. But don't plan too much! You'll find out about great, little-known shows and performers while you are there, and you'll be disappointed if you are too busy to attend.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: The Edinburgh Festival actually consists of _____ separate festivals.

Hint: Number mentioned in the first paragraph

Q2: The festival was originally created to help fund the _____ House.

Hint: Capitalized word in the history section

Q3: The first International Festival took place in the year _____.

Hint: Year mentioned in the history section

Q4: The Fringe Festival began when theatre groups came to Edinburgh _____.

Hint: How the theatre groups arrived (first year section)

Q5: In 2018, the Fringe Festival had over _____ performances.

Hint: Large number in the Fringe section

Q6: The most common type of performance at the Fringe is _____.

Hint: Type mentioned as being over a third of shows

Q7: The Military Tattoo happens at the _____ each night.

Hint: Location in the Military Festival section

Q8: The grand finale includes fireworks timed to _____ music.

Hint: Type of music in the finale

Q9: Visitors should book accommodation and tickets in _____.

Hint: What you need to do before arriving (tips section)

Q10: You might discover _____ shows while at the festival.

Hint: Adjective describing unexpected shows (tips section)

The Man With the Most World Records

Introduction

Ashrita Furman is a record-breaking record-breaker: He has set more records than anyone else in the world! In the last 40 years, he has established more than 600 records!

Childhood Dream

As a child, Ashrita loved reading the Guinness Book of World Records. He wanted to be in it too. But he thought people had to be good at sports to be in the book. He wasn't a good athlete. He felt his dream would never come true.

Finding Inspiration

But later in life, Ashrita learned meditation, and with this, he learned that nothing is impossible. He tested this idea in 1978 by entering a 24-hour bike race in New York. Without any training, Ashrita came third! After that, he started thinking about breaking records again.

First Record

First, he tried to break the record for the most jumping jacks. He failed at first, but, remembering that 'anything is possible', he trained, meditated and tried again. This time, he did 27,000 jumping jacks in 6 hours 45 minutes and became the new record holder. His achievement appeared in the 1980 Guinness Book of Records.

Current Records

Today, Ashrita has a long list of records, including: walking the furthest distance with a bike on his chin, cycling the longest distance with a bottle on his head and lighting the most candles on a birthday cake. He says: 'I choose ideas which are challenging, fun and childish! I enjoy practising and seeing my progress.'

Favorite Records

He says his favourite record was 'the longest distance on a pogo stick'. While he was on holiday in Japan, he saw Mount Fuji and thought it was beautiful, so he decided to try to break a record there. He did 11.5 miles. The most difficult record was 'the most forward rolls'. In 10 hours, 30 minutes, he did 8,341 of them, travelling 12 miles!

Ashrita's Advice

If you want to break a world record too, Ashrita gives this advice. 'Choose something you enjoy because you will need to practise. And don't give up. Your mind will tell you that something is impossible, but it isn't. If someone else has done something, and you work hard, you can do it too!'

Comprehension Questions

Q1: How many world records has Ashrita Furman set?

- A. About 100
- B. Over 600
- C. Exactly 40
- D. Nearly 1,000

Q2: As a child, what did Ashrita think about getting in the Guinness Book?

- A. Anyone could do it
- B. You needed to be good at sports
- C. It was impossible
- D. You needed to be famous

Q3: What changed Ashrita's belief about what was possible?

- A. Winning a competition
- B. Learning meditation
- C. Meeting a record holder
- D. Reading a book

Q4: What was Ashrita's first successful world record?

- A. 24-hour bike race
- B. Jumping jacks
- C. Pogo stick
- D. Forward rolls

Q5: How many jumping jacks did Ashrita do for his first record?

- A. 6,000 in 1 hour
- B. 15,000 in 5 hours
- C. 27,000 in 6h45m
- D. 8,341 in 10h30m

Q6: What kind of records does Ashrita prefer to attempt?

- A. Serious sports records
- B. Challenging and childish ideas
- C. Only athletic records

D. Dangerous stunts

Q7: Where was Ashrita when he set his pogo stick record?

- A. New York
- B. Japan
- C. London
- D. Australia

Q8: What was Ashrita's most difficult record?

- A. Jumping jacks
- B. Bike on chin
- C. Forward rolls
- D. Candle lighting

Q9: What does Ashrita say is important when choosing a record to attempt?

- A. It should be famous
- B. You should enjoy it
- C. It must be dangerous
- D. It should impress people

Q10: What is Ashrita's main message about achieving goals?

- A. Only talented people succeed
- B. Nothing is impossible
- C. Records aren't important
- D. You need lots of money

Three Popular Inventions from the 1920s

Introduction

The 1920s was an exciting time for inventions. Some of the things invented around that time changed the lives of millions of people, and some of those inventions are still widely used today.

The Television

The invention with the biggest impact was probably the television. It was invented by a Scottish man, John Logie Baird. The first televised pictures were sent over a short distance in 1924, and his invention was formally demonstrated at the Royal Institute two years later. The pictures on the screen were not clear, but the viewers could see that they were human faces, and they could see their eyes opening and closing. In 1928, images were sent from Britain to America, and later, to a ship 1,500 miles out to sea. In the same year, the first colour images were sent. The first 'seeing-in sets' were sold that same year. For £25 (£1000 in today's money), people in their homes could watch moving images that were sent from a broadcasting station.

The Fridge

Another invention that became popular in the 1920s was the home refrigerator. People used different ways to keep food cool and fresh long before the 1900s, but home fridges weren't invented until 1913 in the USA. Home fridges became very popular in the USA in the 1920s. Sales of the popular 'Frigidaire' model increased from 5,000 in 1921 to 750,000 in 1926. British people were less interested in fridges than Americans. They thought that they were unnecessary because the weather in Britain was cooler. But fridges were heavily advertised, and their advantages were described in detail. Soon, more fridges were sold, and the price decreased.

The Polygraph

Another interesting invention of the 1920s was the polygraph, or lie detector. It was invented in 1921 by a Californian policeman, John Larson. He used the ideas of other psychologists to make a machine that measured people's heart rate, breathing and blood pressure while they were asked questions. The experts believed that sudden changes in these measurements showed that someone was lying. Although this invention is well-known, it can't really detect lies. Marston tried to use measurements from his polygraph in a court case in 1923, but they weren't accepted as evidence and never have been since then. However, polygraphs are still used by some police forces and the FBI because many people believe they work, so they tell the truth to avoid the machine.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: The television was invented by an American scientist.

- A. True
- B. False

Q2: The first television images were clear and detailed.

- A. True
- B. False

Q3: Home refrigerators were first invented in the 1920s.

- A. True
- B. False

Q4: British people immediately loved refrigerators when they were introduced.

- A. True
- B. False

Q5: The polygraph was invented by a psychologist.

- A. True
- B. False

Q6: Polygraph results are accepted as evidence in court.

- A. True
- B. False

Q7: The first television sets were very expensive.

- A. True
- B. False

Q8: Fridge sales decreased during the 1920s in America.

- A. True
- B. False

Q9: The first color television images were transmitted in 1928.

- A. True
- B. False

Q10: Polygraphs are still used today because they reliably detect lies.

- A. True
- B. False

Three experiences I have had

Introduction

Dear Sir / Madam, I would like to apply for the job of tour leader for your Overland Africa tours. I have had lots of useful experience for this role.

Backpacking in Africa

I have spent five months backpacking around Africa. In 2018, I visited Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania. I used local transport and organised my own accommodation, food and visas. I enjoyed meeting local people, learning about local traditions and visiting natural parks. I read and learned a lot about the culture and wildlife, and I even learned some Swahili and Afrikaans. This trip taught me to be independent and to organise travel arrangements.

Summer Camp Leader

I have also worked as a leader at a children's summer camp in the south of England. I worked there in 2017. I led activities for children aged 9-12, including football, climbing and campfire songs and games. For this work, I received training in climbing instruction and first aid. During this time, I developed many useful skills. For example, I had to ensure the children were always safe and happy. I learned how to be helpful and positive, and I also learned ways to entertain people and help them make friends when they are with strangers.

Active Youth Challenge

Finally, I have completed the Active Youth Challenge. I did this while I was at high school in 2016. To complete this challenge, I firstly had to volunteer with a local organisation. I helped at a social club for the elderly, where I chatted and played games with the members. The experience taught me to be patient and friendly. Secondly, I had to learn something by myself. I learned car mechanics. This taught me some useful, practical skills. Thirdly, I organised a four-day camping and hiking trip in the Scottish mountains with other students from my school. This experience taught me about camping equipment and how to deal with problems like bad weather and getting lost.

Conclusion

I believe I have lots of useful experience to work as an Overland Tour Guide. I would love the opportunity to tell you more about my skills at an interview. Yours faithfully, Nicholas Rigby

Comprehension Questions

Q1: Which paragraph describes learning to solve travel problems?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Q2: Which paragraph mentions learning how to keep people safe?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Q3: Which paragraph talks about helping elderly people?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Q4: Which paragraph describes learning a practical skill like car repair?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Q5: Which paragraph mentions learning local African languages?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Q6: Which paragraph describes organizing a group trip?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

What rainbows mean around the world

Ireland

In Ireland, it rains a lot and there isn't much sun. But sometimes, when the sun comes out after the rain, you can see pretty colours in the sky—that's a rainbow. Old stories from Ireland say that a leprechaun, a small magical man, hides his pot full of gold at the end of the rainbow. You must follow the rainbow to find the gold, but it's very hard. Rainbows always move when you get near, and no one can find the gold. In Irish culture, if you see a rainbow, good things will happen.

Hawaii

Hawaii is called the rainbow capital of the world. After light rain, often the sun comes out, and you can see the rainbow. In Native Hawaiian culture, rainbows are signs that people receive from the gods. Some people believe that rainbows help the spirits of dead people travel from the human world to another world. In Hawaii, a rainbow reminds people they are not alone because someone always looks after them.

Africa

In some African cultures, a rainbow may be a spirit that looks like a snake, bringing good or bad luck, depending on how it feels. For this reason, many people think that a rainbow is a message that something big—good or bad—is going to happen soon.

Australia

In Aboriginal Australian stories, there's a powerful snake called the Rainbow Serpent that lives in water, and it's very old. The Rainbow Serpent made rivers, mountains, and lakes when planet Earth was born. If people respect the land, the snake will be good to them. If they don't, it may bring storms or floods. For Aboriginal people, the rainbow helps us remember that we must respect nature.

Scandinavia

In the north of Europe, old stories say that the rainbow is a bridge called Bifröst. It's the bridge between our world and Asgard, the home of the gods like Odin and Thor. Only gods and brave people can walk across it. The guardian at the beginning of the bridge stops bad people from entering Asgard.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: Which paragraph talks about rainbows as a path to another world?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Q2: Which paragraph says a rainbow means something important is coming?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Q3: Which paragraph describes rainbows in stories from a European country?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Q4: Which paragraph talks about gods walking on a rainbow?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Q5: Which paragraph says people must protect the natural world?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Q6: Which paragraph says rainbows can be good or bad?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E

Why Aren't Babies Born on Certain Days?

Introduction

Do you know anyone whose birthday is Christmas Day? You may know a few, but actually, having a birthday on that day is quite rare.

Rare Birthday Dates

December 25th is the least common birthday in the USA, Australia and New Zealand. Between 30% and 40% fewer babies are born on this day than on the peak days. In England, Wales and Ireland, Christmas Day is the second rarest day for a birthday. There, the fewest birthdays are on December 26th, the national holiday called Boxing Day. Other festival dates are also uncommon. In the USA, the four least common birthdays are Christmas, New Year, Thanksgiving and Independence Day.

Reasons for the Pattern

So why does this happen? Actually, there is a very logical reason. A third of babies in the USA are born by caesarean. Obviously, doctors can plan the date for these operations. They don't schedule them for the national holidays because they want to be celebrating, not working. Also, if babies don't arrive on time, doctors give the mothers drugs to make them give birth. However, they probably won't do this during holidays.

April Fool's Day Exception

Interestingly, though, there are relatively few birthdays on April 1st in England, Wales and New Zealand. It's not a national holiday, so doctors carry out operations as usual. But in those countries, this day is called April Fool's Day. Traditionally people play jokes and trick other people on this day. Maybe mothers avoid giving birth then because they are worried that people will bully or play jokes on their child.

Common Birthday Months

Some times of year are more common for birthdays than others. In the USA and New Zealand, the most popular month is September. In the UK, it's September or early October. The reason for this is because many babies are conceived in the cold, winter months when days are short. Australia, where it is warm in February and March, doesn't show this pattern. In countries further north than the UK, like Norway and Russia, the peak months are earlier: in July or August.

Conclusion

Think about your birthday. Is it at a common time of year? Would you prefer your birthday to be at a different time of year?

Comprehension Questions

Q1: In which countries is Christmas Day the least common birthday?

- A. USA, Australia, New Zealand
- B. England, Wales, Ireland
- C. Norway and Russia
- D. All European countries

Q2: What is the rarest birthday in England and Wales?

- A. Christmas Day
- B. Boxing Day
- C. New Year's Day
- D. April Fool's Day

Q3: Why don't doctors schedule many C-sections on holidays?

- A. Hospitals are closed
- B. They want to celebrate
- C. It's against the law
- D. Equipment doesn't work

Q4: What percentage of US babies are born by C-section?

- A. About 10%
- B. Around 25%
- C. A third
- D. Nearly half

Q5: Why might mothers avoid April 1st births?

- A. Doctors charge more
- B. Hospitals are full
- C. Worried about jokes
- D. Bad weather

Q6: What is the most common birthday month in the USA?

- A. July
- B. August
- C. September

D. December

Q7: Why are September birthdays common in northern countries?

- A. Nice weather for parties
- B. Babies conceived in winter
- C. School starts then
- D. Doctors work more

Q8: Which country doesn't follow the September birthday pattern?

- A. USA
- B. Australia
- C. UK
- D. New Zealand

Q9: In Norway and Russia, when are most birthdays?

- A. June-July
- B. July-August
- C. August-September
- D. September-October

Q10: What is the main reason for birthday patterns according to the text?

- A. Hospital schedules
- B. Weather conditions
- C. Cultural traditions
- D. Doctors' preferences

Why Do People Collect?

Introduction

Petra Engels owns 19,571 erasers, Carol Vaughn has 1,221 bars of soap, and Ralf Schröder has a collection of 14,502 packets of sugar. Many people love to collect things, but why? Psychologists and collectors have different opinions.

Carl Jung's Theory

The psychologist Carl Jung believed that collecting is part of our ancient human history. Thousands of years ago, humans collected nuts and berries. They kept them carefully and ate them when there was no food. The best collectors survived long cold winters or seasons without rain. Their genes passed to future generations. Nowadays, we still have a collecting instinct.

Philipp Bloom's View

Historian Philipp Bloom has a different opinion. He thinks collectors want to make something that will remain after their death. By bringing many similar items together, the collector gains historical importance. Sometimes their collections become museums or libraries, for example, Henry Huntington, who founded a library in Los Angeles to house his collection of books.

Steve Roach's Idea

Author Steve Roach thinks that people collect things to remember their childhood. Many children collect things, but few have enough money to buy the things they really want, and they lose interest. In later life, they remember their collections fondly. Now, they have enough money and opportunity to find special items, and they start collecting again. This way, they can re-live and enjoy their childhood years.

Werner Muensterberger's Theory

Art collector, Werner Muensterberger, agrees that collecting is linked to childhood. But he believes we collect in order to feel safe and secure. While babies hold blankets or toys to feel safe when their mother isn't there, adults collect things to stop feeling lonely or anxious.

Mark Baker's Experience

Autograph collector Mark Baker agrees that collecting is emotional, but he doesn't collect to reduce anxiety. 'For me, it's the excitement,' he says. 'I love trying to get a famous person's autograph. Sometimes I succeed, and sometimes I fail. Also, by collecting autographs, I feel

connected to famous people. I don't just watch them on television. I actually meet them.'

Conclusion

These are just a few reasons for collecting. Do you know any people with collections? Why do they collect?

Comprehension Questions

Q1: How many erasers does Petra Engels own?

- A. 1,221
- B. 14,502
- C. 19,571
- D. 20,000

Q2: According to Carl Jung, why did ancient humans collect food?

- A. For trading
- B. To survive hard times
- C. To show wealth
- D. For fun

Q3: What does Philipp Bloom think collectors want to create?

- A. A business
- B. Something that lasts after death
- C. A family tradition
- D. An art gallery

Q4: Which famous collector founded a library in Los Angeles?

- A. Petra Engels
- B. Henry Huntington
- C. Ralf Schröder
- D. Mark Baker

Q5: According to Steve Roach, why do adults start collecting again?

- A. To make money
- B. To remember childhood
- C. To impress friends
- D. To learn history

Q6: What comparison does Werner Muensterberger make?

- A. Collectors and artists
- B. Adults and babies
- C. Collections and museums
- D. Ancient and modern collectors

Q7: What does Mark Baker collect?

- A. Erasers
- B. Books
- C. Autographs
- D. Soap

Q8: What emotion does Mark Baker associate with collecting?

- A. Fear
- B. Excitement
- C. Sadness
- D. Anger

Q9: Which two experts connect collecting to childhood?

- A. Jung and Bloom
- B. Roach and Muensterberger
- C. Bloom and Baker
- D. Jung and Roach

Q10: What is the main purpose of this text?

- A. To advertise collections
- B. To explain different views on collecting
- C. To teach how to start a collection
- D. To list valuable collections

Intermediate Level

Grammar

A / An, The, No Article

This lesson explains when to use the articles 'a', 'an', and 'the', and when no article is needed in English. It provides rules and examples for each usage, including general, specific, and exceptional cases.

'A' and 'an' are used when mentioning something for the first time, for types or kinds, to mean 'one', and in rates or expressions like 'what a...'.
'The' is used when referring to something specific or already mentioned, or when there's only one of something.

No article is used for general ideas, names of meals, some institutions (like school, bed, hospital), TV as a broadcasting service, and many place names.

We use 'a' before consonant sounds and 'an' before vowel sounds.

We cannot use singular countable nouns alone – they need an article or determiner.

'The' is used with superlatives and with specific locations like oceans, rivers, and known buildings.

Use 'no article' when referring to concepts generally or when the noun is uncountable or plural.

Use 'a' or 'an' when mentioning something for the first time or to refer to one of something.

I saw an old woman with a dog.

Can I have an orange?

Paula is a teacher.

Use 'a/an' for rates or expressions of frequency.

I work 6 hours a day.

The rent is €500 a month.

We were driving at 70 km an hour.

Use expressions like 'what a' or 'such a' with singular countable nouns.

What a fantastic idea!

Yesterday was such a horrible day!

You are such a good friend.

Use 'the' when the person or thing is already mentioned or is known by both speaker and listener.

A man and a woman sat in front of me. The man was British.

Where are the kids? They're in the garden.

Use 'the' when a noun is made specific by additional detail.

I sat on the chair in the corner.

I saw the man who tried to rob me.

Use 'the' with singular unique items and familiar locations.

The moon looks beautiful today.

I'm going to the bank.

She is the best student in the class.

Do not use any article when describing things in general using plural or uncountable nouns.

Love and health are more important than money.

Women drive more cautiously than men.

I love music.

Use no article with places like home, school, bed, work, etc., when referring to their function.

David isn't at school this morning.

She has been in bed all morning.

Maria is in hospital.

Use 'the' with the same places when talking about them as buildings, not their function.

I found the keys under the bed.
I went to the hospital to visit my grandmother.

Use no article with names of meals, time expressions, and certain places.

Dinner is served at 8.
Friday is my favourite day.
Go to page 86.
I saw it on TV.

Use no article with most country, city, and continent names, but use 'the' with plural names or those with Republic, Kingdom, etc.

He lives in Spain.
They visited the Netherlands.
She's from the United States.

Usage Tips

- Use 'a' before consonant sounds and 'an' before vowel sounds (e.g., a car, an umbrella).
- Don't use singular countable nouns without an article or determiner.
- Use 'the' for specific references or when something is already known.
- Use 'no article' for general statements or plural/uncountable nouns.
- Remember the difference in use for places like 'school' vs. 'the school'.
- 'The' is used with rivers, oceans, and superlatives (e.g., the Amazon, the best).

Another / Other / Others / The other / The others

This lesson explains the difference between 'another', 'other', 'others', 'the other', and 'the others'. It includes usage as determiners and pronouns with examples and highlights common mistakes.

'Another' and 'other' can be used as determiners before nouns.

Use 'another' + singular noun: for one more of the same kind.

Use 'other' + plural noun: for different or additional items/people.

'Another' and 'others' can also be used as pronouns (not followed by nouns).

'Others' is only a pronoun and never followed by a noun.

'The other' can be followed by a singular or plural noun to refer to the rest or remaining in a specific set.

'The other' and 'the others' can both function as pronouns to refer to remaining items or people.

Use 'another' + singular noun.

I need another cup of coffee.

She wants another chance.

Use 'other' + plural noun.

I want to talk to other doctors.

We need to contact other clients.

Use 'another' as a pronoun (not followed by a noun).

I've already had one beer, but I'll have another.

You can take one now and another later.

Use 'others' as a pronoun (not followed by a noun).

I don't want to use these glasses. Aren't there any others?

A lot of volunteers have joined us, but we need to find others.

'The other' + singular noun: to refer to the second of two.

This computer here is new. The other computer is about five years old.

We can meet at the other restaurant.

'The other' + plural noun: to refer to the remaining group.

Joel and Karen are here, but where are the other kids?

We've called two members; the other participants are arriving later.

Use 'the other' as a pronoun.

This computer is new. The other is five years old.

One belongs to me, the other is yours.

Use 'the others' as a pronoun.

Joel and Karen are here, but where are the others?

Some of the players are here, the others are still on their way.

Usage Tips

- Use 'another' only with singular nouns.
- 'Others' is always a pronoun, never followed by a noun.
- Do not say 'others doctors' – say 'other doctors'.
- 'The other' refers to something specific, while 'other' is more general.
- Use 'the others' to refer to the remaining people or things in a group.

Can / Could / Be able to – Ability and Possibility

This lesson explains how to use 'can', 'could', and 'be able to' to talk about ability, possibility, permission, and requests. It also covers their correct forms across different tenses and common mistakes.

'Can' and 'could' are used to describe ability and possibility in the present and past.

'Can' and 'could' are also used for permission and making requests.

Sense verbs (see, smell, hear, etc.) are used with 'can', not in continuous forms.

'Be able to' is often used instead of 'can' for all other tenses like future, infinitive, gerund, and perfect.

For specific events in the past, use 'was/were able to' or 'managed to', not just 'could'.

Use 'can/could' for ability.

She could play the piano very well.

I can speak Chinese.

Children can't concentrate for long periods of time.

Use 'can' for possibility.

Anyone can win this competition.

I can't come to the party next week.

Use 'can/could' for permission.

You can't smoke in the house.

Can I come in?

Use 'can/could' in requests.

Can you help me?

Could you speak more slowly, please?

Use 'can' with verbs of perception (see, smell, hear, etc.).

Can you hear that?

I can smell gas!

Use 'be able to' for other tenses or when 'can' is not grammatically possible.

I'd like to be able to visit her more often.

I like being able to talk with my friends.

Will we be able to talk to the singer after the concert?

I haven't been able to study for the exam.

Use 'was/were able to' or 'managed to' for specific past successes.

There was a fire, but all the workers were able to escape.

He was able to find the place.

In negative past sentences, use either 'couldn't' or 'wasn't/weren't able to'.

It was very dark, and they couldn't find the exit.

They weren't able to find the exit.

Usage Tips

- Use 'can' and 'could' for present and past ability respectively.
- Use 'be able to' instead of 'can' when using tenses other than present and past.
- Avoid using 'can' in infinitive or perfect forms.
- 'Could' is not used for successful specific past events – use 'was/were able to' or 'managed to'.
- Always use 'can' with sense verbs – not their continuous forms.

Comparative and Superlative Adjectives and Adverbs

This lesson teaches how to compare people, things, and actions using comparative and superlative forms of adjectives and adverbs. It explains the use of structures like 'more', 'less', 'as...as', and rules for modifying adverbs.

Use the comparative form of adjectives to compare two things.

Use the superlative form to compare more than two things.

'Less + adjective + than' is the opposite of 'more'.

Use 'as...as' or 'not as...as' to show similarity or difference.

You can use object or subject pronouns after 'than' or 'as...as'.

Modifiers like 'much', 'a lot', 'a bit', 'any', and 'no' can change the strength of comparatives.

Use 'in' or 'of' after superlatives to indicate the group or context.

Superlatives are often used with the present perfect + 'ever'.

Use 'the', a possessive, or a name before the superlative.

Use 'the least' as the opposite of 'the most'.

Adverbs can also take comparative and superlative forms.

Adverbs ending in '-ly' use 'more'/'most'; some short adverbs follow adjective rules.

Use the comparative form to compare two things.

White meat is healthier than red meat.

Travelling by bus is more comfortable than travelling by train.

Use 'less + adjective + than' for the opposite of 'more'.

Peter is less considerate than Marta.

Use '(not) as + adjective + as' to compare equality or inequality.

Peter isn't as considerate as Marta.

Use object or subject pronouns after 'than' or 'as...as'.

My sister is taller than me.

My sister is taller than I am.

Use modifiers before comparatives to emphasize differences.

He's a bit taller than me.

Florence is much more interesting than Pisa.

This car is a lot more expensive.

Use 'any/no + comparative' to show comparison in negative or positive sentences.

Your performance was no better than mine.

Your performance wasn't any better than mine.

Use the superlative form to compare more than two things.

She is the best student in the class.

Messi is the best player in the world.

It was the best evening of my life.

I am the tallest of my brothers.

Use the superlative with present perfect + ever for unique experiences.

This is the best movie I've ever watched.

She is the most beautiful woman I have ever seen.

Use 'the', possessives, or names before superlatives.

He is the best.

This is my most expensive jacket.

This is Paul's best friend.

Use 'the least + adjective' for the opposite of superlative.

He is the least hardworking student in the class.

Use comparative and superlative forms of adverbs to compare actions.

She drives fast, but I drive faster.

He plays well, but I play better than him.

She speaks more quietly than her boss.

He cooks well, but more slowly than his workmates.

Use adjective-style comparatives for short adverbs.

He works harder than me.

She always arrives earlier than her boss.

It took us longer than usual to arrive because of the traffic.

Usage Tips

- Comparatives compare two; superlatives compare more than two.
- Use 'more'/'most' with long adjectives and adverbs ending in -ly.
- Use 'less' for the opposite of 'more'.
- Use 'as...as' to show similarity; use 'not as...as' to show difference.
- Use modifiers like 'a bit', 'much', 'no', or 'any' to adjust strength of comparison.
- Short adverbs often follow adjective comparison rules (-er/-est).

During / For / While

This lesson explains how to use 'during', 'for', and 'while' to express time. It focuses on their structure, usage differences, and examples.

'During' is used with a noun to say when something happens.

'For' is used with a length of time to say how long something happens.

'While' is used with a subject and verb to say two things happen at the same time.

'During' answers the question 'when?'; 'for' answers 'how long?'.
'While' answers 'when?'; 'while' answers 'how long?'.
'While' is used with a subject and verb to say two things happen at the same time.

'During' is followed by a noun; 'while' is followed by a clause (subject + verb).

Use 'during' + noun to describe when something happens.

Some people got lost during the journey.

I will finish the novel during the summer break.

Most burglaries happen during the night.

Use 'for' + length of time to describe how long something happens.

We have known each other for a long time.

I waited for more than an hour, but I finally left.

He worked in this company for over twenty years.

Use 'while' + subject + verb to describe two simultaneous actions.

I had breakfast while you were in the shower.

I always listen to the radio while I'm cleaning.

You shouldn't use your phone while you are driving.

Compare 'during' and 'for': 'during' = when, 'for' = how long.

Every day I run for one hour. (= How long?)

I usually run during the weekend. (= When?)

Compare 'during' and 'while': 'during' + noun, 'while' + clause.

I fell asleep during the film.

I fell asleep while I was watching the film.

Usage Tips

- Use 'during' with nouns only, not full clauses.
- Use 'for' to measure duration of time, like minutes, hours, or years.
- Use 'while' with a subject and verb for actions happening at the same time.
- 'During' answers 'when?', 'for' answers 'how long?', and 'while' describes simultaneous actions.
- Avoid using 'during' with time lengths (e.g., ✗ during three hours). Use 'for' instead.

-Ed / -Ing Adjectives

This lesson explains how to use -ed and -ing adjectives formed from verbs, focusing on the difference between describing how someone feels and what causes the feeling.

-Ed and -ing adjectives are participial adjectives formed from verbs.

-Ed adjectives describe how someone feels.

-Ing adjectives describe the thing or situation that causes the feeling.

Use -ed adjectives to describe how someone feels.

We're tired. Can we stop running?
I'm bored. Let's play cards.
I was surprised to see her.

Use -ing adjectives to describe the thing or situation that causes the feeling.

Running is very tiring. We don't want to run.
This film is very boring. Let's play cards.
Her visit was very surprising. We weren't expecting her.

Usage Tips

- Use -ed adjectives for feelings and emotions (e.g., bored, surprised, tired).
- Use -ing adjectives for causes of feelings (e.g., boring, surprising, tiring).
- Remember: people feel -ed, things are -ing.

Future Forms: Will, Be Going To, Present Continuous

This lesson explains the different ways to talk about the future in English using 'will', 'be going to', the present continuous, and other forms such as 'may' and 'might'.

'Will' is used for predictions, instant decisions, offers, promises, and future facts.

'Be going to' is used for intentions, plans, predictions based on evidence, and future arrangements.

The present continuous is used for fixed future arrangements when the time is mentioned.

The present simple is used for future time clauses with words like 'when', 'as soon as', 'until', 'before', and 'after'.

'May' and 'might' are used to talk about possible future actions or events when we are uncertain.

Use 'will' for predictions or future facts.

I think he'll win the election.

He will be a good doctor.

The president will visit the Vatican next November.

Use 'be going to' for near-future predictions based on evidence.

Don't drive like a crazy man. We're going to have an accident!

The doctor said I'm going to have a girl.

Use 'will' for instant decisions.

'Oh, we don't have sugar.' 'Don't worry, I'll buy some.'

Use 'be going to' for planned decisions or intentions.

'Why are you undressing?' 'Because I'm going to go to the swimming pool.'

Use present continuous for future arrangements with a time expression.

I'm seeing the dentist at 6.

We are getting married next week.

I'm flying to New York tomorrow morning.

You can also use 'be going to' for future arrangements.

I'm going to play tennis with Elisabeth today.

Use present simple for future time clauses (when, as soon as, until, before, after).

I'll retire when I'm 70.

I won't call you until I arrive.

Use 'will' for promises, refusals, offers, suggestions, and requests.

I will help you whenever you need me.

I won't lend him my car.

I'll carry that bag for you.

Shall we eat out today?

Will you open the door, please?

Use 'may' or 'might' for uncertain future possibilities.

I might be late for dinner today.

I might go to Denmark next September.

The economy might suffer a global recession next year.

Temperatures may go up next week.

She might not come with us.

We may not have enough time to finish the report for tomorrow.

Usage Tips

- Use 'will' when making instant decisions, promises, or talking about facts.
- 'Be going to' expresses planned decisions and predictions based on present evidence.
- Always include a time expression when using the present continuous for future arrangements.
- In time clauses about the future, use the present simple, not 'will'.
- 'May' and 'might' are great for expressing uncertainty or possible outcomes.

Must / Mustn't / Have to / Don't Have to – Obligation and Advice

This lesson explains how to use 'must', 'mustn't', 'have to', and 'don't have to' for expressing obligation, prohibition, and advice. It also covers the use of 'should', 'ought to', and differences between these modal expressions.

'Have to' is not an auxiliary verb. Use 'do/does/did' for questions and negatives.

'Have to' expresses obligation or rules; it can be used in all verb forms.

'Must' is a modal verb with only present form and is used for strong internal obligation or advice.

'Mustn't' means prohibition (something is not allowed).

'Don't have to' means no obligation (you can do it, but it's not necessary).

'Should' and 'ought to' express advice or opinion and are weaker than 'must' or 'have to'.

Use 'have to' for external obligation or rules.

You have to drive on the left in England.
We had to drive very fast.
Do you have to get up early tomorrow?

Use 'must' for internal obligation or strong advice.

I must go to the doctor.
You must eat less candy.
You must see the new film; it's amazing!

Use 'mustn't' for prohibition.

You mustn't call me before 8.
You mustn't smoke in this area.

Use 'don't have to' for no obligation.

You don't have to wait here.
We don't have to stay until the end.

Use 'can't' or 'be not allowed to' instead of 'mustn't'.

Children can't eat chewing gum.

You are not allowed to smoke here.

Use 'should' for advice or opinion.

You should go to a therapist.

I think schools shouldn't offer soft drinks to students.

Use 'ought to' (formal) for advice – same meaning as 'should'.

You ought to go to a therapist.

You ought not to be so strict with your daughter.

Use 'have to' instead of 'must' in other verb forms.

She's had to work at weekends since she started working.

I'd hate having to wake up early every day.

You will have to come with me.

Usage Tips

- Use 'must' for strong advice or personal obligation.
- Use 'have to' for rules or external obligations.
- 'Mustn't' means it's forbidden; 'don't have to' means it's optional.
- Use 'should' or 'ought to' for weaker, polite advice.
- 'Must' has no past/future forms – use 'have to' instead in those cases.

Passive Voice in Different Verb Tenses

This lesson explains the passive voice in different verb tenses. It shows how to form the passive voice using the correct tense of 'be' and the past participle of the main verb.

In a passive sentence, the object of an active sentence becomes the subject.

The passive voice is formed by using the verb 'be' in the correct tense, followed by the past participle of the main verb.

In passive sentences, the subject receives the action instead of performing it.

The structure of a passive sentence is: subject + 'be' in the correct tense + past participle.

Different tenses in the passive voice are formed by using 'be' in the correct tense and the past participle of the main verb.

Active to passive: The object becomes the subject in the passive sentence.

They take the photos in Africa. (active)
The photos are taken in Africa. (passive)

Use the correct form of 'be' and the past participle to form the passive voice in different tenses.

The house is cleaned every day. (present simple)
The house was cleaned yesterday. (past simple)
The house will be cleaned tomorrow. (future simple)
The documents have been signed. (present perfect)

Usage Tips

- Remember, in passive sentences, the focus is on the action and the receiver, not the doer.
- Use 'be' in the correct tense based on the time frame of the action (present, past, future, etc.).
- The past participle of the main verb is always used in passive voice.
- To form passive sentences, identify the object in the active sentence and make it the subject in the passive sentence.

Present Perfect – Form & Use

This lesson explains the form and various uses of the present perfect tense, including experiences, actions with unspecified time, duration, recent events, and contrast with the past simple.

The present perfect is formed with 'have/has' + past participle.

We use it for past actions when the time is not mentioned or not important.

Common with adverbs like just, already, yet, recently, never, ever, before.

Used with unfinished time expressions (e.g. today, this week, this year).

Used to express life experiences and superlatives with 'ever'.

Describes how many times something has happened up to now.

Used with 'for', 'since', and 'how long' to show duration from past to present.

'Has gone to' means someone is still away; 'has been to' means someone has returned.

Cannot be used with 'ago'.

Contrasts with past simple when the specific time is mentioned or asked.

Use the present perfect for actions without mentioning when.

I've broken my arm.
I've passed the exam.
She's found a job.

Use 'just', 'already', 'yet' for recent or expected actions.

Tony has just called.
I've already finished my homework.
Have you finished your homework yet?
I haven't finished my homework yet.

Use the present perfect with 'recently' for recent actions.

They've recently bought a new car.

Use with unfinished time expressions like 'today', 'this week'.

I've seen John today.

Has she called you this week?

Use the present perfect for past experiences with 'never', 'ever', or 'before'.

I've never read this book.

Have you ever seen a John Wayne film?

I haven't experienced anything like this before.

Use with superlatives + 'ever' to express unique experiences.

This is the best meal I've ever had.

It's the most amazing place we've ever travelled to.

Use the present perfect to say how many times something has happened.

I've watched this film three times.

We've been to Paris twice.

'Has gone to' means still away; 'has been to' means returned.

Tom has gone to Ireland. (=He's in Ireland now)

We have been to Ireland three times. (=We are not in Ireland now)

Use 'for', 'since', and 'how long' for ongoing actions from the past.

We've been married for 25 years.

I've had this watch since I was a kid.

How long have you been friends?

Use 'for' + duration; 'since' + starting point.

I've been here for hours.

She's been my teacher for three years.

I've been unemployed since May.

I've lived in this town since I was born.

Use 'lately' or 'all + time period' for ongoing recent actions.

She's been with me all day.

I've been very busy lately.

Do not use 'ago' with the present perfect.

■ I've had my watch for two years.

■ I've had my watch since two years ago.

Use present perfect for unspecified time; past simple for specific time.

I've lost my keys.

We've been to a very nice restaurant.

We arrived yesterday.

When did the accident happen?

Use past simple for details after a present perfect introduction.

A: I've been to the cinema. B: What did you see? A: I saw a very good film.

A: Oh, you've broken your arm. B: Yes, I have. A: How did it happen?

Usage Tips

- Use short forms ('ve, 's, haven't), but not in positive short answers.
- Use present perfect when time is unknown or not important.
- Use past simple when the time is known, asked, or specified.
- Don't use 'ago' with the present perfect.
- Use 'for' with durations, 'since' with starting points.
- 'Has gone to' = still away; 'has been to' = returned.

Past Simple, Past Continuous, Past Perfect

This lesson explains the three main narrative tenses: past simple, past continuous, and past perfect. It focuses on how they are used to describe sequences, background, and earlier events in the past.

We use narrative tenses to describe events and situations in the past.

The past simple is used for completed actions, main events, and past habits or states.

The past continuous is used to set the scene or describe longer actions in progress in the past.

The past perfect is used for actions or states that happened before other events in the past.

Past simple: completed actions, main story events, past habits or states.

We ate out yesterday.

When she opened the door, she pretended that we weren't there and she went to her room.

He called me and told me to go, but when I arrived, he wasn't there.

We often went to the bar for a drink before dinner.

He really liked sport and was very fit.

Past continuous: setting the scene, longer actions in progress interrupted by past simple.

Last night, I was walking home and listening to my iPod when ...

The sun was shining, and lots of tourists were lying on the beach.

After dinner, I went into the living room and saw that she was crying.

When she opened the door, we were talking about her.

Past perfect: actions or states that happened earlier in the past.

When she opened the door, he had already left.

I realised that I had been there before.

When I met her, I had never been in a serious relationship.

He noticed I had cleaned the car. It was smooth and shiny.

We had driven 500 miles, and we needed some rest.

How many hours had he slept when you woke him up?

The day Anne died, they had been married for 48 years.

The day I left, I had been in England for exactly four years.

She told me she had always hated her sister.

Usage Tips

- Use the past simple for completed actions, past habits, and main story events.
- Use the past continuous to describe background scenes or interrupted actions.
- Use the past perfect to talk about what happened before another past event.
- In stories, the past perfect often comes before the past simple.

Present Perfect Simple vs Present Perfect Continuous

This lesson explains the differences between the present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous tenses, focusing on form, duration, recent results, and usage with dynamic vs stative verbs.

Present perfect simple is used for past actions or experiences when time is not mentioned and for ongoing situations with stative verbs.

Present perfect continuous is used for actions that started in the past and are still happening or have recently stopped, usually with dynamic (action) verbs.

Present perfect simple is formed with 'have/has + past participle'; present perfect continuous is formed with 'have/has been + verb-ing'.

Use present perfect continuous to emphasise the duration of an action or a repeated process.

Use present perfect simple to talk about completed actions or results of finished actions.

Use present perfect continuous for ongoing processes with visible results (e.g., dirty hands from painting).

Use present perfect simple to count how many/much; use continuous to describe how long something has been happening.

Use present perfect simple for finished past actions with no time mentioned.

I've broken my arm.

I've passed the exam.

She's found a job.

Use present perfect continuous for ongoing or recent actions with dynamic verbs.

Have you been crying?

I've been painting.

She's been calling you for days.

Use present perfect continuous with time expressions like 'for', 'since', 'how long', or 'lately'.

I haven't been feeling well lately.

She's been studying very hard for weeks.

How long have you been playing golf?

Use present perfect simple with stative verbs for ongoing situations.

We've had this car for years.

Use present perfect continuous with dynamic verbs to emphasise duration.

I've been waiting for hours!

I've been working all day.

Use present perfect simple for completed actions with results in the present.

Look how nice my car looks. I've washed it.

Have you painted it?

Use present perfect continuous when the result is from the process of the action.

I'm sweaty because I've been washing my car.

Have you been painting?

Use present perfect simple to say how many or how much.

I've written twenty emails.

Use present perfect continuous to say how long.

I've been writing emails for hours.

Compare finished vs unfinished actions using simple and continuous.

Who has eaten my cookies? (no cookies left)

Who has been eating my cookies? (some cookies left)

Switch to past simple to give details after introducing with present perfect.

I've watched the series you recommended. I watched the last episode yesterday.

Usage Tips

- Use present perfect simple for stative verbs and results of completed actions.
- Use present perfect continuous to highlight how long an action has been happening or its ongoing nature.
- Present perfect continuous is not used with non-action verbs like 'know', 'have', or 'be'.
- Use 'how many' with simple and 'how long' with continuous forms.
- Look at whether the result is from the completed action (simple) or the process (continuous).

Present Simple vs Present Continuous

This lesson explains the difference between the present simple and present continuous tenses, including their forms, usage, and examples.

Present simple is used for habits, permanent situations, general truths, and scheduled future events.

Present continuous is used for actions happening now, temporary situations, changing or developing actions, and planned future arrangements.

Short forms are commonly used in spoken English for both tenses.

Stative (non-action) verbs are typically not used in present continuous.

Use present simple for regular habits or routines.

I wash my hair every day.

I never go to the library.

I sometimes go to the library.

Use present simple for permanent situations or truths.

I don't drink coffee.

Water boils at 100 degrees.

I like soup.

Use present simple with adverbs and expressions of frequency.

She doesn't often eat hamburgers.

He usually gets up very early.

We go to the cinema once a month.

Use present simple for scheduled or timetabled events.

The train leaves at 4.

Shops close at 6.

My yoga class is tomorrow at 10.

Use present continuous for actions happening now or around now.

I'm brushing my teeth.

I'm reading a new book.

Use present continuous for temporary actions.

I'm going to work by bus this week.

I'm living with my cousins until I find a flat.

Use present continuous with expressions like now, these days, this week/month.

He's studying a lot this week.

I'm not feeling very well these days.

Use present continuous for changing or developing situations.

The climate is changing very quickly.

More people are trying to eat healthily.

Your English is improving.

Use present continuous for future plans or arrangements.

I'm meeting John this evening.

We are leaving tomorrow at 7.

Stative verbs are not used in present continuous.

I have a car. (NOT I am having a car.)

She seems sad. (NOT She is seeming sad.)

I think he is great. (NOT I am thinking he is great.)

Usage Tips

- Use contractions (short forms) in spoken English for both present simple and present continuous.
- Stative verbs usually describe states, not actions, and are used with present simple.
- Some verbs like 'have', 'think', and 'see' can have both stative and dynamic meanings depending on context.

Reflexive Pronouns

This lesson explains how and when to use reflexive pronouns such as 'myself', 'yourself', 'himself', etc., including emphasis, preposition use, and reciprocal pronouns like 'each other' and 'one another'. It also covers common mistakes with reflexive forms and the expressions 'by myself' and 'on my own'.

Reflexive pronouns are: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves.

Use reflexive pronouns when the subject and object of the sentence are the same.

Reflexive pronouns can follow prepositions when referring back to the subject.

Use reflexive pronouns for emphasis to show that the subject did the action personally.

Some verbs that are reflexive in other languages are not reflexive in English, such as wash, shave, dress, hurry, and relax.

Use 'by myself', 'by yourself', etc., to mean alone or without help.

You can also use 'on my own', 'on your own', etc., with similar meaning.

Reciprocal pronouns 'each other' and 'one another' are used when two or more people do the same action to each other.

Use reflexive pronouns when the subject and object are the same.

She cut herself chopping the onions.

We really enjoyed ourselves at the party.

Talking to oneself is not necessarily a sign of madness.

Use reflexive pronouns after prepositions referring to the subject.

He should be really proud of himself.

With the 3-D printer and this scanner, you can print a small version of yourself.

Use reflexive pronouns to emphasise who did the action.

I will talk to Anna myself.

I think you should do it yourself instead of having it done.

Paul himself designed everything.

Do not use reflexive pronouns with common non-reflexive verbs in English.

The first thing I do is wash, shave, and dress.

When I arrive home, I only want to relax on the sofa.

Please hurry, or we'll be late.

The door opened, and everybody got in.

Use 'by myself' or 'on my own' to mean alone or without help.

My son doesn't like to be by himself; he always wants us around.

She raised her four children by herself.

I was on my own all morning.

She did it on her own.

Use reciprocal pronouns to show mutual action between people.

When the twins found each other, they had been living apart for more than ten years.

You should try to understand one another.

Usage Tips

- Reflexive pronouns are used when the subject and object are the same.
- Use 'by yourself', 'by myself', etc., to mean alone or without help.
- Don't use reflexive pronouns with verbs like 'wash', 'dress', or 'relax' unless absolutely necessary.
- Use reflexive pronouns for emphasis to highlight who performed the action.
- 'Each other' and 'one another' are reciprocal, not reflexive – don't confuse them.
- 'On my own' and 'by myself' have similar meanings and can be used interchangeably.

Used to

This lesson explains how to use 'used to', 'be used to', and 'get used to' in English. It covers how to talk about past habits, situations that are no longer true, and the process of becoming accustomed to something.

'Used to + infinitive' is used to talk about repeated actions or situations in the past that are no longer true.

'Be used to' describes a state where you are accustomed to something.

'Get used to' refers to the process of becoming accustomed to something.

In negative sentences, we use 'didn't use to' instead of 'used to'.

For present habits, we use 'usually', 'normally', or 'often' with the present simple tense.

After 'be used to' or 'get used to', we use a noun or an '-ing' verb, not an infinitive.

Use 'used to + infinitive' to talk about past habits or repeated actions.

When I was a child, I used to go skiing every winter.

I didn't use to smoke before I got this job.

Use 'used to' to describe situations or states that are no longer true.

As a child, I used to be blond.

I used to live with my mum when I was a child.

Use 'didn't use to' in negative sentences and 'did you use to' in questions.

I didn't use to do sport as a teenager.

Did you use to study in the library when you were in uni?

Use 'usually', 'normally', or 'often' with present simple for present habits.

We usually go to the cinema on Friday evenings.

'Be used to' is used to describe being accustomed to something.

When I started working, it was hard to get up at 6 a.m., but now I'm used to it.

I'm still not used to driving on the left.

'Get used to' describes the process of becoming accustomed to something.

I'm still getting used to getting up so early.

You'll get used to driving on the left.

After 'be used to' and 'get used to', use a noun or '-ing' verb.

I'm not used to this cold and rainy weather.

I'm sure you'll get used to working with John.

Usage Tips

- 'Used to' is only used with the infinitive form of the verb.
- Remember to use 'be used to' for describing a state of being accustomed to something.
- 'Get used to' refers to the process of becoming familiar with something.
- When forming negative sentences or questions with 'used to', use 'didn't use to' or 'did you use to'.
- For present habits, use 'usually', 'often', or 'normally' with the present simple tense.

Vocabulary

Animals

Essential vocabulary to talk about common animals, their body parts, and the sounds they make.

Common Animals

This section covers various animals with descriptions and examples.

Puppy: A young dog.

Example: The children played with the adorable puppy in the park.

Kitten: A young cat.

Example: The kitten chased a ball of yarn across the floor.

Bee: An insect known for making honey.

Example: The bee buzzed around the flowers in the garden.

Wasp: A yellow and black flying insect with a painful sting.

Example: A wasp flew by and everyone moved away quickly.

Peacock: A bird known for its colorful feathers.

Example: The peacock displayed its beautiful tail feathers.

Crab: A sea animal with a hard shell and claws.

Example: We saw a crab walking sideways on the beach.

More Animals

Additional animals with their descriptions.

Hedgehog: A small brown animal with spines on its back.

Example: We saw a hedgehog in the garden at night.

Tadpole: The larval stage of a frog.

Example: We watched the tadpoles swimming in the pond.

Bat: A nocturnal flying animal with wings made of skin.

Example: We saw a bat flying in the evening sky.

Seagull: A bird that lives near the sea.

Example: The seagulls flew above us looking for food.

Snail: A slow-moving animal with a soft body and hard shell.

Example: The snail moved slowly across the garden path.

Animal Body Parts

Vocabulary for different parts of animals' bodies.

Paw: The foot of an animal like a cat or dog.

Example: The cat used its paw to gently tap the toy.

Claws: Sharp, curved nails on animals' feet.

Example: The eagle used its claws to catch the fish.

Beak: The hard, pointed part of a bird's mouth.

Example: The parrot used its beak to crack open the seed.

Fins: Flat parts on a fish's body that help it swim.

Example: The shark's fin could be seen above the water.

Whiskers: Long, thin hairs on the face of some animals.

Example: The cat's whiskers twitched as it explored its surroundings.

More Body Parts

Additional vocabulary for animal anatomy.

Hooves: Hard coverings on the feet of horses and deer.

Example: The horse's hooves made a loud sound on the pavement.

Scales: Small, flat pieces of skin covering fish and reptiles.

Example: The fish's scales shimmered in the sunlight.

Shell: Hard, protective outer covering of some animals.

Example: The turtle retreated into its shell when it sensed danger.

Horns: Hard, pointed growths on heads of some animals.

Example: The goat used its horns to defend itself.

Animal Sounds

Vocabulary for sounds made by different animals.

Meow: The sound a cat makes.

Example: The kitten let out a soft meow when it was hungry.

Bark: The sound a dog makes.

Example: The dog started to bark loudly at the stranger.

Roar: The loud, deep sound a lion makes.

Example: The lion let out a mighty roar in the jungle.

Chirp: The short, sharp sound birds make.

Example: The birds began to chirp early in the morning.

More Animal Sounds

Additional vocabulary for animal sounds.

Hiss: The sound a snake makes.

Example: The snake let out a hiss when it felt threatened.

Moo: The sound a cow makes.

Example: The cow gave a loud moo in the field.

Neigh: The sound a horse makes.

Example: The horse greeted its owner with a happy neigh.

Growl: A low, threatening sound made by dogs or wolves.

Example: The dog began to growl when it sensed danger.

Education

Common verb phrases used to talk about education, differences between the British and American education systems, and vocabulary related to different types of schools.

Verb Phrases

This section covers common verb phrases used in the context of education.

Take/sit an exam: Attend an exam.

Example: I always feel nervous before taking exams.

Pass an exam: Obtain successful results in an exam.

Example: I was pleased when I heard that I'd passed my exam.

Fail an exam: Obtain unsuccessful results in an exam.

Example: Mum was angry because I'd failed my exam.

Revise/review/study for an exam: Prepare for an exam.

Example: I have to revise for my exams this weekend.

Hand in an assignment/essay: Give an assignment to a teacher or lecturer.

Example: I handed in my assignment yesterday morning.

Give a presentation: Give a talk delivering information to a class or group.

Example: Tom gave a presentation on solar energy.

Write an essay: Write a piece of writing on a particular subject as part of a course.

Example: I wrote an essay on crime for English class.

Attend a class/lecture: Go to and be present in a class/lecture.

Example: Sam has attended all his classes this term.

Do homework/research/a project: Carry out the action of homework, etc.

Example: I usually do my homework when I get home.

Take notes: Write down what the teacher is saying.

Example: I always take notes when the teacher is talking.

Graduate from school: Leave school having obtained a diploma.

Example: After I graduate from school, I'll look for a job.

Enrol in a course: Sign up for a course.

Example: I've enrolled in a business course which starts next week.

Drop a class: Stop taking a class.

Example: I decided to drop my history class as I wasn't enjoying it.

Get a grade: Receive a mark (A, B, C / 50%, 70%, etc.) for a test, essay, etc.

Example: I was pleased when I got a good grade for my essay.

Study abroad: Study in another country.

Example: I would love to study abroad, preferably in an Asian country.

Be expelled: Be asked to leave school as punishment for bad behaviour.

Example: Sid was expelled after being caught cheating in his exams.

Education Systems and Schools

Learn about the differences between the British and American education systems, as well as different types of schools.

Nursery (Pre-school in the US): Where British children go between the ages of three and five. In the US, it's called pre-school. Children experience a taste of school life without formal academic learning.

Primary School (Elementary School in the US): Where British children attend from the ages of five to eleven. The American equivalent is elementary school, where children stay until they are eleven or twelve. The first year is kindergarten in the US.

Secondary School (Middle School and High School in the US): British children attend secondary school from ages eleven to sixteen. In the US, children first attend middle school or junior high school from ages eleven to fourteen, followed by high school until seventeen or eighteen.

College (6th Form in the UK): After secondary school, some British teens begin college (also called 6th form) to study until they are eighteen. They may then go to university for higher education. In the US, college refers to higher education after high school, and university is often interchangeable with college.

University: Higher education institution where students study for a degree. In the US, the term college is used interchangeably with university.

Food and Cooking

Essential vocabulary to talk about food types and cooking methods, including fruits, vegetables, meats, seafood, and preparation techniques.

Fruits and Vegetables

This section covers common fruits and vegetables with descriptions and examples.

Grapes: Small round fruits used to make wine.

Example: Grapes are used to make wine.

Cherries: Small, round fruit with red skins, often used in desserts.

Example: Cherries are small, round fruit with red skins, often used in desserts.

Peach: Sweet summer fruit with pinky-orange skin.

Example: A peach is a sweet summer fruit with pinky-orange skin.

Carrots: Long, thin vegetables with orange skin and flesh.

Example: Carrots are long, thin vegetables with orange skin and flesh.

Broccoli: Nutritious green vegetable.

Example: Broccoli is a nutritious green vegetable.

Aubergine/Eggplant: Vegetable with smooth, dark purple skin.

Example: An aubergine (UK) or eggplant (US) has a smooth, dark purple skin.

Meat, Fish & Seafood

This section covers different types of meat, fish and seafood.

Beef: Meat of a cow.

Example: Beef is the meat of a cow.

Chicken: White meat from a bird, considered healthy.

Example: Chicken is white meat from a bird, and it's considered to be healthy.

Pork: Meat of a pig.

Example: Pork is the meat of a pig.

Salmon: Popular fish with pink meat.

Example: Salmon is a popular fish with pink meat.

Prawns: Seafood with tasty, soft meat inside.

Example: Prawns have a tasty, soft meat inside.

Mussels: Seafood with smooth black shell and orange flesh.

Example: Mussels have a smooth black shell and orange flesh.

Cooking Methods

This section covers different ways to prepare and cook food.

Steamed: Cooked in vapour over boiling water, considered healthy.

Example: I ordered steamed fish with vegetables.

Boiled: Cooked in very hot water, a healthy preparation method.

Example: Boiled eggs are healthier than fried eggs.

Fried: Cooked in oil or fat in a frying pan.

Example: I had a fried egg for breakfast.

Baked: Cooked in the oven using flour and yeast.

Example: I could smell the freshly baked bread.

Roasted: Cooked for a long time in the oven or over a fire.

Example: The chicken was served with roasted potatoes.

Food-related Phrasal Verbs

This section covers common phrasal verbs used when talking about food and eating habits.

Eat out: To eat away from home, in a restaurant.

Example: We often eat out at the weekend.

Cut down on: To consume less of something.

Example: I'm trying to cut down on red meat.

Go on a diet: To follow a special eating plan to lose weight.

Example: Tom went on a diet because he needed to lose a few kilos.

Put on weight: To become heavier.

Example: I put on all the weight that I had lost.

Free Time Activities

Essential verbs, phrasal verbs, and expressions to talk about free time and leisure activities, with clear definitions and example sentences.

Verbs and Phrasal Verbs for Free Time Activities

This section covers common verbs and phrasal verbs used when talking about leisure and free time activities.

Stay in: To spend your time at home instead of going out.

Example: Last night, I stayed in and read my favorite book.

Go out: To leave your home to do something enjoyable, such as visiting places or seeing people.

Example: Tomorrow, we plan to go out for dinner.

Eat out: To have a meal in a restaurant instead of at home.

Example: On Saturdays, we usually eat out at a new restaurant.

Hang out: To spend time in a place or with someone.

Example: This afternoon, I'm going to hang out with Tom and Alex at the mall.

Chill out: To relax and take it easy, especially after something tiring or stressful.

Example: I just want to chill out at home after a long week at work.

Get together: To meet and spend time with other people.

Example: Weekends are the only time we can all get together.

Play an instrument: To make music with a musical instrument, such as a guitar, piano, or violin.

Example: Playing the guitar in his free time is his favorite activity.

Watch TV / a movie: To spend time watching television or a film for entertainment.

Example: Last night, I watched a great movie on TV.

Take up a hobby: To start doing a new activity regularly for enjoyment.

Example: I'd like to take up photography this year.

Work out: To do physical exercise to keep fit and healthy.

Example: I work out at the gym three times a week.

Play sports: To take part in games or physical activities such as football, basketball, or tennis.

Example: Every weekend we play football or volleyball on the beach.

Go + -ing verb: To describe doing an activity like swimming, shopping, or dancing.

Example: This winter, we'd like to go skiing.

Go for + noun: To describe doing an activity such as going for a walk or a run, usually for exercise or pleasure.

Example: Every morning before work, I go for a run.

Go to + place: To visit a location for entertainment or socializing.

Example: Tonight, we're going to the theatre to see a play.

Have lessons: To learn something from a teacher, such as music, driving, or drama.

Example: Every Thursday, she has piano lessons.

Play computer games: To engage in electronic games on a computer for fun.

Example: He spends his evenings playing computer games.

Go online / browse the web: To use the internet for browsing websites, communicating, or other activities.

Example: In the evenings, I go online to read the latest news.

Spend time with someone / doing something: To use your time to be with a person or engage in an activity.

Example: I love to spend time with my family on weekends.

Have fun / have a great time: To enjoy yourself and have an enjoyable experience.

Example: We had a great time at the amusement park yesterday.

Enjoy yourself: To have a good time and take pleasure in what you are doing.

Example: At your party last night, I really enjoyed myself.

Hotels and Accommodation

Essential vocabulary to talk about different types of accommodations and describe hotel experiences, including types of lodging and adjectives for reviews.

Types of Accommodation

This section covers different places people stay when traveling.

Hotel: A building with many rooms for travelers, varying in price and quality.

Example: We stayed at a luxury hotel with a spa and swimming pool.

B&B; (Bed and Breakfast): Small accommodation that includes breakfast, often in someone's home.

Example: The cozy B&B; had homemade breakfast served every morning.

Vacation rental/Holiday let: An entire home rented out for holiday use.

Example: We booked a vacation rental by the beach for our family holiday.

Guest house: Small private accommodation similar to a hotel but more personal.

Example: The guest house was run by a friendly local couple.

Homestay: Staying in someone's home to experience local culture.

Example: My homestay in Japan included meals with the host family.

Resort: Hotel with recreational facilities and included amenities.

Example: The beach resort had three pools and five restaurants.

More Accommodation Types

Additional types of lodging options for travelers.

Lodge/Cabin: Small house in nature, often with outdoor facilities.

Example: We rented a wooden cabin in the mountains for skiing.

Youth hostel: Budget accommodation with shared dormitories.

Example: As students, we stayed in youth hostels to save money.

Motel: Hotel designed for motorists, usually with parking.

Example: We stopped at a roadside motel during our road trip.

Describing Hotels and Services

Adjectives commonly used to describe hotel staff and services.

Attentive: Staff who listen carefully to guests' needs.

Example: The attentive staff remembered our coffee preferences.

Understaffed: Not having enough employees to serve guests properly.

Example: The restaurant was understaffed, so service was slow.

Efficient: Providing good service without wasting time.

Example: The efficient receptionist checked us in quickly.

Describing Rooms and Facilities

Vocabulary for evaluating accommodation quality.

Spotless: Extremely clean, without any dirt.

Example: Our hotel room was spotless when we arrived.

Spacious: Having plenty of room; not cramped.

Example: We upgraded to a spacious suite with a living area.

Modern: Contemporary style and facilities.

Example: The hotel had a modern design with smart technology.

Tatty: Old and in poor condition.

Example: The armchairs in the lobby looked tatty and worn.

Describing Location and Value

Vocabulary for evaluating accommodation location and pricing.

Central: Located in the middle of a town or city.

Example: The hotel's central location was perfect for sightseeing.

Overpriced: Costing more than it's worth.

Example: The tiny room was overpriced for what it offered.

Convenient: Located near useful facilities and transport.

Example: The hotel was convenient for the conference center.

Describing Food and Experience

Vocabulary for evaluating hotel food and overall stay.

Delicious: Extremely tasty food.

Example: The hotel restaurant served delicious local cuisine.

Bland: Lacking flavor or taste.

Example: The breakfast buffet looked nice but tasted bland.

Disappointing: Not as good as expected.

Example: Our stay was disappointing due to poor service.

Memorable: Worth remembering for being special.

Example: The amazing views made our stay truly memorable.

Houses

Vocabulary for talking about houses, including rooms and parts of a house, adjectives for describing houses, and verbs related to repair and renovation.

Rooms and Parts of a House

This section covers common names for different rooms and areas in and around a house.

Attic: A room at the top of a house under the roof.

Example: I store old clothes and books in the attic.

Loft: An open space under the roof of a house, often used as a bedroom or living area.

Example: She turned the loft into a cozy reading area.

Basement: The floor of a house or building which is partly or entirely below ground level.

Example: There's a ping pong table and a home cinema projector in our basement.

Cellar: A room below ground level in a house used for storage, especially wine or food.

Example: Grandpa keeps his wine collection in the cellar.

Landing: The floor area at the top of a staircase.

Example: There's a small table on the landing with a vase of flowers.

Shed: A small building used for storage or hobbies, often in a garden.

Example: Dad keeps his gardening tools in the shed.

Porch: A covered area next to the entrance of a house.

Example: We enjoy sitting on the porch during summer evenings.

Patio: An outdoor area next to a house used for eating or relaxing.

Example: They have a barbecue grill on their patio.

Playroom: A room where children can play.

Example: The kids are playing in the playroom.

Study: A room in a house used for work or study.

Example: He's reading in the study.

Pantry: A small room or closet in a house where food is stored.

Example: We keep our canned goods in the pantry.

Utility room: A room in a house where you keep things such as a washing machine, sink, and cleaning equipment.

Example: We put the dirty laundry in the utility room.

Describing a House

This section covers adjectives and expressions used to describe houses and rooms.

Spacious / Roomy: Large in size or area, allowing you to move freely and relax.

Example: Our new living room is so spacious that we can have a big sofa and a coffee table in it.

Cramped: Very small and without enough space for moving around comfortably.

Example: The old kitchen was cramped; it was too small for a table.

Cozy: Small, warm, and comfortable, making you feel relaxed.

Example: The small country house was cozy, with a warm fireplace and soft lighting.

Light: Having a lot of natural light from the sun, making it bright.

Example: My bedroom is light and sunny, perfect for reading during the day.

Dark: Not having much light, so it looks shadowy or gloomy.

Example: The basement is dark, and we need to use extra lights when we go down there.

Furnished / Unfurnished: A furnished house or room has furniture in it; unfurnished means it does not.

Example: The apartment came furnished, so it already had beds, tables, a sofa, etc.

Two-story (Two-storey UK): A house with two levels or floors.

Example: We live in a two-story house, with bedrooms upstairs and a living room downstairs.

In good condition / In bad condition: Well maintained and without damage (good) or not maintained and needing repair (bad).

Example: Our home is in good condition because we recently painted it and fixed the roof.

In a good location: In a place that is convenient or desirable, often close to shops or schools.

Example: Our house is in a good location, close to the school and the grocery store.

Verbs Related to Repair and Renovation

This section covers common verbs used for fixing, improving, and maintaining houses.

Fix / Repair / Mend: To work on something that is broken so it is no longer broken.

Example: I need to fix the broken chair in the dining room.

Decorate / Redecorate: To make a room or house more attractive by adding things like paint, wallpaper, or ornaments.

Example: We will decorate our living room with new curtains and a rug.

Renovate / Refurbish / Do up (UK): To make big improvements by repairing and decorating a house or room.

Example: We are going to renovate the old house to make it look new.

Install / Put in: To place something like equipment or furniture into a house or room so it can be used.

Example: They will put in a new sink in the kitchen next week.

Insulate: To add materials to walls, roofs, or floors to improve heat or noise conditions.

Example: We should insulate the attic to keep the house warmer in winter.

Do DIY: To do home improvement or repair work by yourself without hiring professionals.

Example: On the weekend, I'm going to do some DIY and build a bookshelf.

Do housework: To do routine work to keep your house clean and organized.

Example: Every Saturday, I do housework like cleaning the floors and dusting.

News & Media

Vocabulary related to journalism, broadcasting, and the people involved in the media industry, including print and digital publications, television, radio, and common roles in news production.

Written Media

Key vocabulary for describing printed and online publications.

Print Media: Any type of mass publication printed on paper, such as newspapers and magazines.

Example: Print media is less popular than it was in the past.

Magazine: A regular publication in the form of a thin book containing articles and photographs on a particular topic.

Example: I read it in a science magazine.

Newspaper: A daily or weekly publication on folded paper containing news articles and advertisements.

Example: I read the news in the newspaper this morning.

Tabloid: A type of newspaper with small pages, many photos, and articles of a less serious nature.

Example: I don't always believe what I read in the tabloids.

Front Page: The first page or cover of a newspaper; front-page news is of great importance.

Example: The story was on the front page of every newspaper.

Headline: The large text at the top of an article summarising its main point.

Example: Many people only read the headlines, so they are not really informed.

Article: A piece of writing on a particular topic, published in a magazine or newspaper.

Example: I read an interesting article on elephants.

Blog Post: An informal piece of writing published regularly on a blog.

Example: Tom writes a new blog post for his blog every week.

Television and Radio

Vocabulary for talking about broadcasting and related content.

Broadcast: To send out radio or TV content; also used as a noun for the content itself.

Example: The World Cup final will be broadcast live on several sports channels this Sunday.

TV Channel: A television station and the shows it broadcasts.

Example: They show a lot of good shows on that TV channel.

Radio Station: A network that produces and broadcasts radio programmes.

Example: I listen to my favourite radio station while I drive to work.

Programme / Program: A show broadcast on television or radio.

Example: I watched an interesting programme on television last night.

Advertisement / Ad: A message in print, online, on TV, or on a poster promoting a product, event, or job.

Example: I saw an advertisement in the paper for a second-hand bicycle.

Commercial: The American term for an advertisement broadcast on television or radio.

Example: The problem with that channel is that there are too many commercials.

People in the Media

Key vocabulary for describing roles in journalism and broadcasting.

The Press: A collective term for journalists, photographers, and others who work in the media.

Example: After the incident the press was all over the place.

Journalist: A person who researches, writes, and reports news through various media platforms.

Example: That journalist writes an article in the local newspaper every week.

Listener: A person who listens to radio programmes.

Example: The number of listeners has increased since the station hired a new presenter.

Viewer: A person who watches television content.

Example: It's a popular show with over 30 million viewers.

Audience: The group of people who watch or listen to a programme.

Example: We have an important message for our audience.

Paparazzi: Photographers who follow famous people to take photos of them.

Example: The paparazzi were waiting outside the actor's house.

Cameraman: Someone who films programmes, ads, or reports for television or cinema.

Example: The cameraman told me to act natural.

Presenter: A person who presents a programme on radio or television.

Example: That man is a presenter on the 5 o'clock news.

Host: A type of presenter who talks to guests on a programme.

Example: The host welcomed the two guests to the show.

Reporter: Someone who collects and reports news for radio or television.

Example: The reporter was speaking live from the site of the disaster.

Sports Reporter: A reporter who collects and delivers sports news.

Example: As a sports reporter, Sam attends a lot of football matches.

Weather Reporter: A reporter who informs the public about predicted weather.

Example: The weather reporter said that it would be sunny all weekend.

Relationships

Terms to describe different types of relationships, verbs, verb phrases, and phrasal verbs used to talk about different stages or events that occur in relationships.

Types of Relationships

In this section, you will learn vocabulary related to different types of relationships.

acquaintance: Someone you know but is not a close friend.

close friend: A person you spend a lot of time with and share personal matters.

best friend: Your closest friend, often like family.

colleague: A person you work with. You can also say co-worker or workmate (informal).

flatmate: A person you share an apartment or flat with.

couple: Two people in a romantic relationship.

wife: A married woman.

husband: A married man.

partner: A person you are married to or having a relationship with.

ex: A person you were once in a relationship with. You can also say ex-boyfriend, ex-wife, etc.

date: A person you are meeting because you have or want to have a romantic relationship. A date is also the appointment to meet this person. If you have never met this person, it's a blind date.

Verbs, Phrasal Verbs, and Verb Phrases

This section covers common verbs and phrasal verbs related to relationships.

get to know:

Example: When we meet new people, we get to know them. We learn about their lives, what they like, etc.

get on well:

Example: If we like each other, we might say we get on well. This means we enjoy each other's company and have a good relationship.

hang out:

Example: Sometimes, we might hang out with someone. When people hang out, they spend time together, doing things like watching movies, chatting, or going for a walk.

go out with:

Example: If we start to like someone in a special way, we might go out with them. This means we start dating or being in a romantic relationship.

have a crush on:

Example: Sometimes, before we start dating, we might have a crush on someone. When you have a crush on a person, you like them a lot in a romantic way.

propose:

Example: If two people in a relationship love each other very much, one might propose to the other. This means asking the other person to marry them.

get married:

Example: If they say yes, they get married. This means they become husband and wife or partners.

break up:

Example: When relationships end, and people break up. This means they stop being in a romantic relationship.

having an affair:

Example: Sometimes, people break up because their partner is having an affair. This means they date or have a romantic or sexual relationship with someone else.

keep in touch:

Example: After a relationship ends, or when two people stop working together, going to the same school, or living in the same town, they sometimes keep in touch. This means they continue to talk and be friends.

lose touch:

Example: But sometimes people lose touch, and they stop talking or seeing each other.

fall out with:

Example: Finally, if you fall out with someone, it means you have a big argument or fight, and it hurts your relationship.

Sport

Vocabulary related to sports, including people involved, sports facilities, and common verbs and phrases used to describe sporting actions and events, with clear definitions and example sentences.

People in Sport

Key vocabulary for describing people involved in sports events.

Crowd / Spectators: The people who watch a sports event.

Example: The crowd cheered loudly when the team scored a goal.

Fans: People who enthusiastically follow and support a sport, team, or player.

Example: Thousands of fans gathered in the city to celebrate their victory.

Players: Individuals who participate in a sports game or event.

Example: The players shook hands after the match as a sign of sportsmanship.

Team: A group of players working together in a sport.

Example: The team practiced every evening for their big game.

Goalkeeper: The player who guards the goal in sports like football and hockey.

Example: The goalkeeper made an amazing save during the final minutes of the match.

Manager / Coach: The person who trains and directs the team.

Example: The coach gave a motivational talk to the players at halftime.

Referee: An official who enforces the rules in sports such as football, basketball, and boxing.

Example: The referee blew the whistle to signal the end of the match.

Umpire: An official who enforces the rules in sports such as tennis, baseball, and cricket.

Example: The umpire shouted, 'Out!'

Linesman: An official who helps the main referee by indicating when the ball is out of play or when players are offside.

Example: The linesman raised his flag to indicate an offside.

Sports Facilities and Places

Vocabulary for describing where sports are played.

Stadium: A large structure with seats for spectators, where sports events are held.

Example: The stadium was filled with excited fans for the championship game.

Pitch: The area of ground where sports like football, cricket, or hockey are played.

Example: The football players ran onto the pitch as the game began.

Court: A playing area for sports like basketball, volleyball, or tennis.

Example: The players entered the tennis court for the final match.

Golf Course: The area where golf is played.

Example: The golfers walked across the course to the next hole.

Sports Hall / Gymnasium: A building or room designed for indoor sports and physical education.

Example: The students gathered in the sports hall for the basketball tournament.

Track: A circular or oval path for running, cycling, or motor racing.

Example: The runners lined up on the track for the 100-meter race.

Ski Piste / Slope: A marked path on a mountain for skiing.

Example: Skiers enjoyed going down the amazing ski pistes.

Verbs for Talking About Sport

Common verbs and phrases used to describe actions and events in sports.

Win: To be better than your opponents in a match or competition.

Example: When she won the race, her team celebrated their victory.

Beat / Defeat: To perform better than someone in a game or contest.

Example: He beat his opponent in the final set of the tennis match.

Draw: When two teams or players have the same score at the end of a game.

Example: England and Italy drew one-one.

Break a Record: To achieve a better score or time than ever before.

Example: She broke the record for the fastest 100-meter sprint.

Hold a Record: To maintain the best score or time until someone else breaks it.

Example: The swimmer has held the world record for the 200-meter freestyle for three years.

Score: To gain goals, points, or baskets.

Example: He scored the winning goal in the last minute of the game.

Get Injured: To hurt yourself while playing or practicing a sport.

Example: She got injured during the football match and had to leave the field.

Warm Up: To do exercises to prepare for physical activity.

Example: Before the race, the runners warm up to avoid injuries.

Get Fit: To improve your physical condition through exercise and healthy living.

Example: He started jogging every day to get fit.

Be Sent Off: To be made to leave the game as a penalty for breaking the rules.

Example: The player was sent off for arguing with the referee.

Throw: To propel a ball with your hand or arm.

Example: The quarterback threw the football to his teammate.

Hit: To make contact with a ball using a bat, racket, or similar.

Example: She hit the tennis ball across the court.

Pass: To send the ball to a teammate.

Example: He passed the basketball to his teammate, who was open for a shot.

Kick: To strike a ball with your foot.

Example: The soccer player kicked the ball towards the goal.

Head: To hit the ball with your head.

Example: The player headed the ball into the goal from the corner kick.

Catch: To stop and hold a ball that has been thrown, kicked, or hit.

Example: The baseball player caught the ball, and the batter was out.

The Body: Parts and Actions

Names of body parts and common actions related to them, with clear definitions and example sentences to aid understanding and memory.

Parts of the Body

This section covers the names of different human body parts and their locations.

Eyebrows: Two lines of hair above your eyes.

Example: Cara raised her eyebrows in surprise.

Forehead: The top of your face, just above your eyebrows.

Example: Lisa's long hair covers her forehead.

Cheeks: The two sides of your face, below the eyes and beside the nose.

Example: Peter's cheeks were red from the cold.

Chin: The lower part of your face, just below the mouth.

Example: A beard now covers Larry's chin.

Breasts: The front part of a woman's chest that can produce milk.

Example: The baby was lying against its mother's breast.

Pecs: Short for pectoral muscles, the chest muscles, often referring to men's chests.

Example: Tim's pecs have grown since he started going to the gym.

Ribs: A series of bones on each side of your body, just below your chest.

Example: The boy was so thin that I could see his ribs.

Elbow: The joint in the middle of your arm that bends.

Example: You shouldn't put your elbows on the table when you're eating.

Wrist: The narrow part connecting your arm to your hand.

Example: Lucy wears a gold watch around her wrist.

Thumb: The widest and shortest finger, closest to the wrist.

Example: The ring was so big that I could only wear it on my thumb.

Waist: The narrow part of your body between the chest and hips.

Example: Karen was wearing a leather belt around her waist.

Hips: The bones on either side of your waist.

Example: My hips are quite wide, and I find it hard to find jeans that fit.

Bottom: The soft part of the body you sit on.

Example: After sitting on the wet chair, Sam's bottom was wet.

Thigh: The top part of your leg, between the torso and the knee.

Example: Lara's skirt was so short that it barely covered her thighs.

Calf: The muscular part at the back of the lower leg, below the knee.

Example: After exercising at the gym, my calf muscles were sore.

Ankle: The joint connecting your leg to your foot.

Example: My ankles were cold, so I put on a longer pair of socks.

Heel: The bottom back part of your foot, below the ankle.

Example: After wearing new shoes all day, Paula's heels were very sore.

Body Actions

This section covers common verbs describing actions people do with their bodies.

Breathe: To take air into your lungs and then expel it.

Example: I went outside to breathe in some fresh air.

Sneeze: To suddenly expel air from your nose and mouth.

Example: I had a bad cold, and I couldn't stop sneezing.

Taste: To put something in your mouth to sense its flavor.

Example: I tasted the soup and then decided to add more salt.

Smell: To sense a scent through your nose.

Example: Lucy bent down to smell the roses.

Yawn: To open your mouth wide involuntarily when tired or bored.

Example: It was obvious that Paul was tired because he couldn't stop yawning.

Snore: To make a noise with your nose while sleeping.

Example: Mary couldn't sleep because her husband was snoring loudly.

Smile: To turn up the corners of your mouth to show pleasure.

Example: When his grandmother gave him the chocolate, Joe smiled and said thank you.

Laugh: To make sounds and movements of the face when amused.

Example: The film was really funny, and we couldn't stop laughing.

Bite: To use your teeth to cut into something.

Example: I bit into the juicy apple.

Swallow: To make food or drink go from your mouth to your stomach.

Example: The biscuit was dry and difficult to swallow.

Whistle: To produce a musical sound by forcing air through your lips.

Example: I could hear Joe whistling as he washed his car.

Sweat: To produce salty liquid from the skin, usually due to heat or exercise.

Example: Mike was sweating because he'd just finished working out.

Nod: To move your head up and down to show agreement.

Example: Matt nodded his head in agreement.

Shake your head: To move your head from side to side to show disagreement or refusal.

Example: When I asked Max if he wanted more cake, he shook his head and said, 'No, thank you.'

Clap: To bring your hands together to make a sound, often in applause.

Example: At the end of the performance, the audience clapped.

Grab: To take hold of something suddenly or firmly.

Example: Jamie grabbed the toy out of his sister's hand.

Hold: To carry or keep something in your hands.

Example: The lady was holding her baby in her arms.

Kick: To hit something or someone with your foot.

Example: I kicked the football to Tony.

Punch: To hit something or someone with your fist.

Example: Mario punched Luis in the face.

Bend: To move the top part of your body downward and forward.

Example: Mary bent down to pick up her bag.

Transport

Essential vocabulary to talk about different modes of transportation, road infrastructure, and common phrases used in travel situations.

Means of Transport

This section covers different vehicles used for transportation.

Train: Series of connected vehicles on tracks for transporting people or goods.

Example: We took the train from London to Edinburgh.

Tram: Rail vehicle that runs on city streets for short-distance travel.

Example: The tram is the easiest way to get around the city center.

Bus: Large road vehicle that carries passengers on a fixed route.

Example: I catch the bus to work every morning.

Subway/Underground/Tube: Train system that operates in tunnels below cities.

Example: The underground is the fastest way to travel across London.

Ferry: Large boat for transporting passengers and vehicles.

Example: We took the ferry across the river.

Road Infrastructure

Vocabulary related to roads and transportation systems.

Bus/Tram stop: Place where these vehicles stop to pick up or drop off passengers.

Example: Wait for me at the bus stop near the park.

Platform: Area where passengers board a train.

Example: Our train leaves from platform 3.

Motorway/Highway: Major road with multiple lanes for long-distance travel.

Example: There was heavy traffic on the motorway this morning.

Roundabout: Circular intersection where several roads meet.

Example: Take the second exit at the roundabout.

Traffic jam: Long line of vehicles that cannot move.

Example: We were late because of a traffic jam on the highway.

Tickets and Travel

Vocabulary related to tickets and travel arrangements.

Single ticket: Ticket for a one-way journey.

Example: I need a single ticket to Manchester, please.

Return ticket: Ticket for a round trip (going and coming back).

Example: A return ticket is cheaper than two single tickets.

Speed limit: Maximum legal speed for vehicles on a road.

Example: The speed limit in town is 30 miles per hour.

Commute: Regular journey between home and work.

Example: My commute takes about 45 minutes each way.

Transport Verbs

Common verbs and phrases used with transportation.

Get on/Get off: Enter/exit large vehicles like buses or trains.

Example: Get off at the next stop for the museum.

Get in/Get out: Enter/exit smaller vehicles like cars or taxis.

Example: Get in the car, we're leaving now.

Pick up: Collect someone in a vehicle.

Example: Can you pick me up from the station at 6?

Fill up (the tank): Put fuel in a vehicle.

Example: We need to fill up the tank before our trip.

Run out of petrol/gas: Have no more fuel left.

Example: We nearly ran out of petrol on the motorway.

Travel Time

Phrases for talking about journey duration.

It takes...: Used to describe journey duration.

Example: It takes about two hours to get to the airport.

How long does it take...: Question about journey duration.

Example: How long does it take you to get to work?

Miss (a transport): Fail to catch a vehicle.

Example: I missed my train by just one minute!

Get to: Arrive at a destination.

Example: What time do you usually get to the office?

Types of Movies and TV Shows

Essential vocabulary to talk about different genres of films and television programs, including descriptions and examples.

Movie Genres

This section covers different types of movies with descriptions and examples.

Comedy: A film or TV show intended to be funny.

Example: The comedy was so funny that we couldn't stop laughing.

Action film: Fast-paced movie with fighting and exciting scenes.

Example: I don't enjoy action films; I find them too violent.

Rom-com: Romantic comedy where main characters fall in love.

Example: At the end of the rom-com, the two main characters got married.

Horror film: Frightening movie intended to scare the audience.

Example: After watching the scary horror film, I was afraid to turn off the light.

Sci-fi film: Movie about futuristic ideas or technology.

Example: I watched an excellent sci-fi film set in space in the year 4099.

More Movie Genres

Additional types of movies with their descriptions.

Musical: Movie where part of the story is told through songs.

Example: I love watching musicals and singing along to the songs.

Thriller: Exciting film full of suspense.

Example: The thriller was so exciting that I couldn't take my eyes off the screen.

Western: Cowboy movie set in 19th century mid-west USA.

Example: When I was a kid I loved cowboys, so I watched a lot of westerns.

Family film: Movie suitable for all ages.

Example: We watched a fun family film last night that everyone enjoyed.

TV Show Types

Vocabulary for different types of television programs.

TV series: Show with many episodes shown regularly.

Example: It's one of my favourite TV series; I've seen every episode at least three times.

Sitcom: Comedy program with regular characters in amusing situations.

Example: We watched a funny new sitcom on Saturday night.

Reality show: Show focusing on ordinary people in everyday situations.

Example: There aren't any actors in reality shows, they're just normal people playing themselves.

Documentary: Factual program about a person, event, or topic.

Example: We watched a fascinating documentary about the sinking of the Titanic.

More TV Show Types

Additional vocabulary for television programs.

Game show: Show where people play games to win money.

Example: I saw a new game show where the guests have to answer mathematical problems.

Talent show: Show where people compete by singing, dancing, etc.

Example: The winner of the talent show had a beautiful singing voice.

Wildlife show: Factual program focusing on animals and nature.

Example: I watched a great wildlife show on sharks last weekend.

Sports show: Program covering sports news and events.

Example: The host of the sports show was discussing the match with the team's coach.

Work and Employment

Essential vocabulary to talk about jobs and employment, including verbs, nouns, and phrases related to working conditions, job types, and employment status.

Verbs Related to Work

This section covers common verbs and phrases used when talking about employment and work situations.

Earn: To make money through work.

Example: Sam earns \$30,000 a year in his job as a chef.

Do overtime: To work more hours than are stated in your contract.

Example: We're very busy at work right now, so I'm doing a lot of overtime.

Apply for a job: To show interest in a position by sending your CV and other documents.

Example: When I heard about the vacancy, I applied for the job immediately.

Resign/Quit: To leave a job voluntarily.

Example: Tom resigned from his job because he'd decided to take a year off and go travelling.

Retire: To stop working altogether, usually because of old age.

Example: I plan to retire as soon as I turn 65.

Be/Get promoted: To be given a position with more responsibility.

Example: Nick was promoted to floor manager just months after joining the company.

Be sacked/Fired: To be dismissed from a job, usually because of poor performance.

Example: James was sacked from his job at the supermarket after he was caught stealing money.

Be in charge of/Responsible for: To have authority or control over somebody or something.

Example: As manager of a busy café, Sara is in charge of 15 members of staff.

Nouns and Adjectives Related to Work

This section covers common nouns and adjectives used to describe job types and employment situations.

Full-time job: A job where a person works a standard number of hours each week.

Example: As soon as he finished school, Tim got a full-time job in a bank.

Part-time job: A job with fewer hours than a full-time position.

Example: When I was a student, I had a part-time waitressing job.

Work shifts: To work during various scheduled periods of the day or night.

Example: When I was a nurse, I worked a lot of night shifts.

Temporary job: A job that is not permanent.

Example: Eve has a temporary job in a school, covering for a teacher who is on maternity leave.

Self-employed: Working for yourself rather than for a company.

Example: Alice is a self-employed writer and works from home.

Unemployed: Without a job and looking for work.

Example: Bob has been unemployed since he lost his job last year.

Workplace: The place where you go to do your job.

Example: Our office is a friendly workplace; we all get on really well.

Qualifications: Certificates or degrees that qualify you for a job.

Example: Ian was not given the job because he didn't have the right qualifications.

Work vs Job

This section explains the difference between these commonly confused terms.

Job: A countable noun referring to a profession or occupation.

Example: He's had many different jobs. This is a difficult job.

Work: An uncountable noun referring to the activity of doing a job.

Example: I have a lot of work to do. What time do you finish work?

Work (place): Can also mean the place where people do their job.

Example: How do you go to work? I have lunch at work.

Money

Essential vocabulary to talk about money, including common nouns, verbs, and verb phrases related to spending, payments, savings, and more.

Verbs and Verb Phrases Used to Talk About Money

This section covers common verbs and phrases used when talking about money management.

Spend money on something: To use money to pay for something.

Example: I spent \$20 on petrol yesterday.

Waste money: To spend money on things that you don't need.

Example: John wasted all his money on that sports car.

Borrow: To ask for and take someone else's money with the intention of returning it.

Example: I borrowed \$200 from my sister. I'll pay her back when I get paid.

Lend: To give money to someone on the condition that they return it.

Example: My sister lent me \$200. I'll pay her back when I get paid.

Pay for something: To give money to a seller in exchange for products or services.

Example: Tom paid for the taxi.

Pay back: To return money that you have borrowed.

Example: I need to pay Joe back the money I borrowed from him last week.

Cost: To require a particular amount of money in exchange for something.

Example: The ring costs €299.

Charge someone (for something): To ask for money in exchange for goods or services.

Example: The mechanic charged me €50 for fixing my car.

Save money: To not use or waste money, or gradually collect money by spending less than what is earned.

Example: I saved a lot of money by booking my tickets online.

Afford to do/buy something: To have enough money to pay for something.

Example: I can afford to buy a new phone because I just got paid.

Be worth: To be valued at a particular amount of money.

Example: The ring is worth over \$3,000.

Withdraw (or take out) money: To take money out of an account.

Example: I withdrew money from the cash machine.

Nouns Used to Talk About Money

This section covers common nouns related to money, such as cash, bank accounts, and expenses.

Cash: Money in the form of coins or notes.

Example: I paid for the book in cash.

Coins: Flat round pieces of metal used as money.

Example: I paid for the book with a €5 note and some coins.

Notes: Pieces of paper of different values used as money.

Example: I paid for the book with a €5 note and some coins.

Bank account: An arrangement with a bank to look after a customer's money.

Example: I withdrew €50 from my bank account.

Deposit: Money put into a bank account.

Example: To open an account, you need to make a minimum deposit of \$500.

Wallet: A small case for holding notes and coins, often used to carry money.

Example: Although there isn't any cash in my wallet, there are a few credit cards.

Credit card: A small personalized plastic card used to pay for things.

Example: Although there isn't any cash in my wallet, there are a few credit cards.

Cash machine (ATM): A machine where you can withdraw money from your bank account.

Example: I withdrew €40 from the ATM.

Cheque: A piece of paper from the bank that specifies an amount of money to be paid to someone.

Example: I paid for the delivery by cheque.

Loan: Money lent to you by a bank that you promise to repay with interest.

Example: I took out a loan to buy a new car.

Mortgage: A special loan for buying a house or property.

Example: We wanted to buy a flat, so we took out a mortgage.

Salary: A fixed amount of money given regularly by an employer.

Example: Fred's salary is just under €20,000 a year.

Income: The total money a person earns in a specific time.

Example: Sally's total annual income is just over €45,000.

Expense: The money required to do or pay for something.

Example: We spend a lot of money on electric bills.

Budget: The amount of money available to spend on something.

Example: Our holiday budget is €2000; this should cover meals and other expenses.

Bill: A communication informing you of how much money you need to pay for goods or services.

Example: We spend a lot of money on electric bills.

Phone Talk

This lesson teaches essential vocabulary for talking about phones, including different phone types, common features, and actions you take when making or receiving calls.

Phone Types and Features

This section covers different types of phones and their key features with descriptions and examples.

landline: A phone that stays in one place and is connected by a cable.

Example: You can call me on my landline in the evenings.

mobile phone (UK) / cell phone (US): A phone you can carry with you and use anywhere.

Example: I usually carry my mobile in my back pocket.

smartphone: A mobile phone that can connect to the internet and run apps.

Example: I was able to check my emails on my smartphone.

voicemail: A system that records messages when you miss a call.

Example: Jim didn't answer the call, so I left a message on his voicemail.

signal: The strength of the phone connection.

Example: You'll get a stronger signal if you go out into the garden.

ringtone: The sound your phone makes when someone calls.

Example: That's my phone ringing. I recognise the ringtone.

SIM card: A small card in your phone that stores your phone number and information.

Example: All your personal data is stored on the SIM card inside your phone.

charger: A cable used to power your phone's battery.

Example: I was unable to charge my phone because I had left my charger at home.

Phone Call Actions

This section includes vocabulary for actions you take when using a phone, like making and receiving calls.

dial a number: To press numbers on a phone to make a call.

Example: I picked up the phone and started to dial his number.

ring / call: To contact someone by phone.

Example: I'll ring you as soon as I get home.

pick up the phone: To answer a call.

Example: Tom's phone was ringing, so he picked it up and said "Hello."

hold on: To wait on a call for a short time.

Example: Of course, you can speak to Tony. Hold on, and I'll go get him.

put through: To connect a person's call to another person.

Example: The helpful receptionist put me through to the manager.

hold the line: To wait on the phone after your call has been answered.

Example: Please hold the line while we try to connect you to one of our sales assistants.

on hold: When you are waiting to speak to someone who is on another call.

Example: When I finally got through to the bank, they put me on hold for ages.

busy: When the person you are calling is already talking to someone else.

Example: Joe's line is busy; I'll try calling him later.

ring back / call back: To return a call to someone who called you earlier.

Example: Sam called while you were out. I told him you'd ring him back this evening.

missed call: A call that you did not answer.

Example: I saw a missed call from my friend, so I called her back.

hang up: To end a phone call.

Example: I said goodbye and hung up the phone.

cut off: When your phone is disconnected in the middle of a call.

Example: We were unable to finish our conversation because we were cut off in the middle of our call.

Reading

A Town that Lives in One Building

A Hidden Gem in Alaska

Located in the beautiful state of Alaska, a little town called Whittier is tucked away in a picturesque area surrounded by mountains and the ocean. This hidden gem is hard to reach: the only ways to and from Whittier are either by ferry or through a one-lane tunnel that cuts through the mountains. This tunnel is unique because it is shared by both vehicles and trains, necessitating a precisely managed schedule to accommodate both modes of transportation and both directions of traffic.

Whittier's Economy

Whittier's economy thrives on its port, the town's main source of employment, where cargo ships drop off their containers for rail transportation across Alaska. The town also has a grocery store, a museum, two hotels, and various other job opportunities for all its citizens: police officers, municipal workers, educators at the local school, and marina staff. Tourism has grown over the last few years to become an alternative source of income, drawing visitors to attractions such as the Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel, glacier jet ski tours, and scenic boat excursions that offer breathtaking views of marine wildlife and icebergs.

Living Under One Roof

Nearly all of Whittier's 200-odd residents live under the same roof in the Begich Towers, a 14-story building that is more than just an apartment complex; it's a self-contained town. Harsh winter weather with heavy snowfalls and fierce winds explains the convenience of this arrangement. All necessary facilities and services are in one building, so residents don't have to go outside for errands or to go to church. Even the school is connected through a tunnel. This makes life in such an extreme climate much more manageable.

Military Origins

The origins of Whittier's unique living situation date back to the early 20th century when the area was chosen for a military base. Shielded by mountains and located by a bay with unfreezing waters, it was ideal strategically. Initially, soldiers lived in wooden camps, but later, two significant buildings were built: the Buckner Building and the Begich Towers. The tunnel was constructed in the 1940s for railway access, turning Whittier into an important cargo and passenger port. After the military left in the 1960s, the Buckner Building was abandoned, and the Begich Towers became the main residential space.

Life Today in Whittier

Today, Whittier's residents can take the elevator to go grocery shopping, visit the police station, or eat 'out'—though in this case, 'eat in' might be more accurate. There's even a health clinic for minor medical needs. Everything is a few steps away, fostering a strong community bond. Whether sharing coffee at the café or attending a community meeting, residents enjoy a unique and supportive environment.

A Remarkable Town

Whittier might be small, but it's a remarkable example of adaptability and community spirit. Its single-building town, surrounded by Alaska's breathtaking landscape, is a testament to human ingenuity and resilience.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: What is unusual about Whittier's tunnel?

- A. It is underwater
- B. It is shared by cars and trains
- C. It changes direction daily
- D. It only works in summer

Q2: What is Whittier's main source of employment?

- A. Tourism
- B. Its port
- C. The museum
- D. The hotel industry

Q3: Why do residents live in one building?

- A. It is a tradition
- B. It is safer during earthquakes
- C. To avoid harsh winter weather
- D. Because the other buildings are abandoned

Q4: What was Whittier's original purpose?

- A. A fishing village
- B. A mining town
- C. A military base
- D. A tourist destination

Q5: What happened to the Buckner Building?

- A. It was turned into a hotel
- B. It was abandoned
- C. It became the school
- D. It burned down

Q6: Which of these is NOT mentioned as being inside Begich Towers?

- A. A café
- B. A police station
- C. A health clinic
- D. A swimming pool

Actors Who Died on Set

Brandon Lee

Brandon Lee, son of the famous martial artist and actor Bruce Lee, died in 1993, while filming “The Crow”. He was acting as the main character in a scene where his character gets shot, but no one knew that a small piece of a real bullet got stuck in the gun. When the gun was fired, the piece of the bullet came out and hit Brandon in the stomach. Even though doctors tried to help him, Lee passed away later that day. This accident made people think more about how to keep actors safe on movie sets.

Vic Morrow

Vic Morrow’s death happened during the filming of “Twilight Zone: The Movie” in 1982. He portrayed a character in the Vietnam War. In this scene, Morrow was carrying two child actors across a river while being chased by a helicopter. During filming, explosives were used, causing the helicopter to crash in the river. As a result, Morrow and the two young actors lost their lives immediately and six passengers onboard were injured. During the investigation, the film director was found guilty of having children working near explosives illegally.

Jon-Erik Hexum

The accidental death of Jon-Erik Hexum occurred on the TV show “Cover Up” in 1984. During a break from filming, the actor was playing with a gun used in one of the scenes pointing it at his head and pulled the trigger as a joke. Even though the gun did not have real bullets, the force was strong enough to hurt him badly. A piece of bone from his head went into his brain. He was taken to the hospital immediately, but despite emergency surgery, he was pronounced brain dead six days later.

Roy Kinnear

Roy Kinnear’s tragic accident took place while he was filming “The Return of the Musketeers” in 1989. During a scene with horse riding, Kinnear fell from his horse and broke a bone near one of his hips. Despite the severity of his injury, Kinnear was determined to continue filming and completed his scenes. However, his health conditions got worse and ended up affecting his heart. Sadly, Kinnear passed away from a heart attack caused by these complications.

Steve Irwin

Steve Irwin, known as “The Crocodile Hunter,” was working on a documentary called “Ocean’s Deadliest” in 2006 off the coast of Queensland, Australia when tragedy struck. While filming a segment about dangerous fish, Irwin approached a stingray – a type of flat fish with long, sharp

tails – in shallow water. The stingray felt it was in danger and attacked the man. The fish had used its sharp tail to poke Steve Irwin in the chest, and the pointy part went into his heart. His crew and emergency services tried to save him, but Irwin didn't survive. His sudden death shocked the world and left millions of fans upset for the loss of a man who was truly passionate about the natural world.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: What caused Brandon Lee's death during filming?

- A. A stunt accident
- B. A piece of real bullet in a gun
- C. A fall from a building
- D. A car crash

Q2: During which movie was Vic Morrow killed?

- A. The Return of the Musketeers
- B. Twilight Zone: The Movie
- C. Cover Up
- D. Ocean's Deadliest

Q3: What was Jon-Erik Hexum doing when he fatally injured himself?

- A. Filming a fight scene
- B. Playing with a gun during a break
- C. Riding a horse
- D. Swimming in a river

Q4: What happened to Roy Kinnear after he fell from his horse?

- A. He immediately died
- B. He recovered quickly
- C. He developed heart problems and died
- D. He was paralyzed

Q5: What animal caused Steve Irwin's death?

- A. A shark
- B. A crocodile
- C. A stingray
- D. A jellyfish

Q6: Where was Steve Irwin filming when the accident happened?

- A. Off the coast of Queensland
- B. In Sydney Harbour

- C. On the Great Barrier Reef
- D. In the Amazon River

Adopting a Child

Adopting a Child

Adopting felt like the right choice for my husband and I. It wasn't because we couldn't have a baby by ourselves. I didn't get pregnant naturally, but we could have tried IVF. But I was worried that doing so would affect our relationship. We had always aimed to do things together and share responsibility. But that's not possible when it comes to pregnancy and IVF. Plus, my husband's mother was adopted, so it didn't seem an unusual thing to do. Since then, I've realised just how many kids are in care, looking for homes and families, and I know it was the right choice. Parents interested in adoption have to go through an in-depth training course. They not only learn about the experiences of kids in care, but also they study their own lives in detail. It's an emotional process because you remember all sorts of issues from your past that you'd rather not think about. But it teaches you a lot about yourself and your partner. Afterwards, you are far more prepared to deal with family issues than people who become parents naturally. The adoption agency encouraged us to specify what sort of child we wanted to adopt regarding their sex, age, appearance, health, educational ability, hobbies and so on. We didn't feel comfortable about that because we would have been happy to provide a home for any child who needed it. But their reasoning was clear. The better the child meets the parents' expectations, the more likely it'll succeed. Our training had taught us that we had certain expectations of family life, so we followed their advice and came up with a list. We had to have an interview in front of a large panel of social workers to be accepted as potential parents. We did everything we could to prepare for that. We even volunteered with a local youth group to get experience with children, as we didn't have any nieces, nephews or friends with kids. As soon as they'd come to a decision – a positive one, our social worker brought out a file with information about kids currently in care. We started to put documents into piles: "yes", "no" and "maybe". We got further information about three of those kids, and one stood out for us both. He was six years old, which is quite old among children who are up for adoption. Many parents prefer to adopt toddlers because they want to experience teaching them to walk, talk, read and write. That wasn't important to us. It does seem a shame, though, that 6-year-olds already face discrimination for their age. Things happened very fast after that. We met the boy's foster carers and teachers, and his social worker visited us at home. However, parents only meet the child they're going to adopt once the adoption has been finalised. That way, the kid doesn't get stressed or given false hopes. After a second interview, we were accepted. A week was put in the diary when we would first spend time with the boy at his carer's home, taking him out on trips or just hanging out playing games and reading stories. A few days later, they stayed at a hotel near our house, and he gradually spent more time with us. Finally, the carers left, and the boy stayed – we now had a son!

Comprehension Questions

Q1: Why did the narrator choose adoption instead of IVF?

- A. They could not afford IVF
- B. They wanted to avoid relationship strain
- C. Their doctor advised against IVF
- D. They were against medical treatments

Q2: What did the adoption training course involve?

- A. Learning about the law only
- B. Studying their own lives and experiences
- C. Meeting the children before adoption
- D. Practising parenting with dolls

Q3: Why did the agency ask them to specify the type of child they wanted?

- A. To make the process faster
- B. To ensure the adoption is more likely to succeed
- C. To limit the number of children available
- D. To match them with the healthiest child

Q4: Why did they volunteer with a local youth group?

- A. To meet potential children for adoption
- B. To gain experience with children
- C. To complete mandatory volunteer hours
- D. To pass time while waiting

Q5: Why do many parents prefer adopting toddlers?

- A. They require less care
- B. They are easier to teach to walk, talk, read and write
- C. They are less expensive to raise
- D. They are more likely to be adopted quickly

Q6: When do adoptive parents meet the child they will adopt?

- A. Before they are approved
- B. During the training course
- C. After the adoption is finalised
- D. Before meeting the child's carers

Cheating in Sports

What Counts as Cheating?

Anyone who loves sports will agree that cheating is bad. For example, it was wrong for Spain to include players who were not actually disabled in the 2000 Sydney Paralympics basketball team. However, sometimes it is hard to decide what is cheating and what is not. Many sports encourage players to be 'sporting' – to play honestly and accept losing. But the rewards for winning can be great, so it is natural for players to find different ways to win. Sometimes they bend the rules or cheat to get an advantage.

Gamesmanship

Gamesmanship is when you try to win by bending the rules or using doubtful tactics. For example, at the 2012 Olympics, British cyclist Philip Hindes had a bad start in a team race. Knowing that if a rider fell early the race would be restarted, he crashed his bike on purpose. Britain went on to win gold.

Psychological Tactics

Other examples of gamesmanship include faking injuries or wasting time. This can give players a rest or annoy their opponents, affecting their concentration. At the 2016 Rio Olympics, badminton player Carolina Marins shouted every time her opponent made a mistake. This upset her opponent, but Marins won gold without breaking any rules.

The Role of Referees

In unclear situations, it is the referee's job to decide if cheating is happening. Players can take advantage because referees can't see everything. For example, in cricket, if the ball hits a batter's legs, he is out. Most batters know when they are out, but they often wait for the umpire's decision in case it goes in their favour. This is not considered cheating.

Famous Cases

In the 1986 World Cup, Diego Maradona scored a goal with his hand. The referee didn't see it, and Maradona didn't admit it. In contrast, in the 2002 World Cup, Rivaldo faked an injury but was caught and fined.

Losing on Purpose

At the 2012 London Olympics, four women's badminton doubles teams from China, Indonesia, and South Korea purposely played badly to get an easier match later. They broke no rules but were disqualified for poor sportsmanship.

A Question to Consider

Where there are games, people will try different ways to win. But is bending the rules the same as cheating, or does it just make the game more interesting?

Comprehension Questions

Q1: Why was Spain's basketball team in the 2000 Sydney Paralympics criticised?

- A. Because they cheated during a match
- B. Because they included players who were not disabled
- C. Because they refused to play fairly
- D. Because they won unfairly against the host team

Q2: What is gamesmanship?

- A. Breaking all the rules to win
- B. Trying to win by bending the rules
- C. Winning without using any tactics
- D. Using only fair play

Q3: Why did Philip Hindes crash his bike in the 2012 Olympics?

- A. Because he had a mechanical problem
- B. Because he wanted to restart the race
- C. Because he was injured
- D. Because he wanted to avoid finishing last

Q4: How did Carolina Marins affect her opponent in the 2016 Rio Olympics?

- A. By shouting to upset her opponent
- B. By faking an injury
- C. By wasting time
- D. By playing slowly

Q5: Why do some cricketers wait for the umpire's decision even when they know they are out?

- A. Because it's part of the game's strategy
- B. Because they want to challenge the umpire
- C. Because they hope the umpire might not notice
- D. Because they are not sure if they are out

Q6: How did Maradona cheat in the 1986 World Cup?

- A. By scoring a goal with his hand
- B. By faking an injury
- C. By wasting time
- D. By distracting the referee

Q7: Why were four badminton teams disqualified at the 2012 London Olympics?

- A. Because they played too aggressively
- B. Because they broke equipment
- C. Because they purposely lost to get easier matches
- D. Because they refused to play

Q8: What question does the text leave for the reader?

- A. Should all sports be fair?
- B. Is bending the rules the same as cheating?
- C. Can sports be played without rules?
- D. Should referees be removed from games?

Chocolate Town for Chocolate Workers

The Origins of Bournville

If you love chocolate, maybe you have eaten a bar of Cadbury's Bournville chocolate. But Bournville isn't just the name of an English chocolate bar. It's the name of a village which was built especially for workers at the Cadbury's chocolate factory. George and Richard Cadbury took over the cocoa and chocolate business from their father in 1861. A few years later, they decided to move the factory out of the centre of Birmingham, a city in the middle of England, to a new location where they could expand.

Choosing the Location

They chose an area close to the railways and canals so that they could receive milk deliveries easily and send the finished products to stores across the country. Here, the air was much cleaner than in the city centre, and the Cadbury brothers thought it would be a much healthier place for their employees to work. They named the site Bournville after a local river called 'The Bourn'. 'Ville', the French word for town, was used because at the time, people thought French chocolate was the highest quality. The new factory opened in 1879.

Building the Village

Close to it, they built a village where the factory workers could live. By 1900, there were 313 houses on the site, and many more were built later. The Cadbury family were religious and believed that it was right to help other people. They thought their workers deserved to live and work in good conditions. In the factory, workers were given a fair wage, a pension and access to medical treatment. The village was also designed to provide the best possible conditions for workers too.

Village Facilities

The houses, although traditional in style, had modern interiors, indoor bathrooms and large gardens. The village provided everything that workers needed including a shop, a school and a community centre where evening classes were held to train young members of the workforce. Since the Cadbury family believed that their workers and their families should be fit and healthy, they added a park with hockey and football pitches, a running track, bowling green, fishing lake, and an outdoor swimming pool.

Community Life

A large clubhouse was built in the park so that players could change their clothes and relax after a game. Dances and dinners were also held here for the factory workers, who were never

charged to use any of the sports facilities. However, because the Cadbury's believed that alcohol was bad for health and society, no pubs were ever built in Bourneville! The Cadbury brothers were among the first business owners to ensure that their workers had good standards of living.

Bournville Today

Soon, other British factory owners were copying their ideas by providing homes and communities for their workers designed with convenience and health in mind. Today, over 25,000 people live in Bournville village. There are several facilities there to help people with special needs, such as care homes for the elderly, a hostel for people with learning difficulties and affordable homes for first-time homeowners and single people. Over a hundred years since the first house in Bournville Village was built, the aims of its founders are still carried out.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: Why did the Cadbury brothers move their factory from Birmingham city centre?

- A. To be closer to cocoa farms
- B. To find cleaner air and space to expand
- C. Because the city centre was too noisy
- D. To avoid paying city taxes

Q2: Why was the name 'Bournville' chosen?

- A. It combined a local river name with a French word for town
- B. It was the name of the Cadbury family home
- C. It sounded similar to their chocolate recipe name
- D. It was the name of the first worker to live there

Q3: What benefits did Cadbury factory workers receive?

- A. Free chocolate for life
- B. A fair wage, pension and medical treatment
- C. Company cars and holiday homes
- D. Shares in the business

Q4: What was NOT included in Bournville village?

- A. A school
- B. Sports facilities
- C. A community center
- D. Pubs

Q5: What was the purpose of the clubhouse in the park?

- A. Only for management meetings
- B. For changing clothes and relaxing after sports
- C. As a storage space for sports equipment
- D. To host visiting chocolate buyers

Q6: How does Bournville continue the Cadbury brothers' vision today?

- A. By maintaining the original chocolate recipes
- B. By providing facilities for people with special needs
- C. By banning all modern technology
- D. By only employing local residents

Different Family Types

Jordan

Living in an extended family with both my parents and grandparents was a bittersweet symphony of love and tradition. The comfort of having a large, close-knit family was unparalleled. I felt loved by not two but four people who truly cared about me, which made me grow into a very self-confident man. I also learned to accept and appreciate the ideas and points of view of two different generations before me. Of course, there were times when I would have wanted a little more privacy and alone time. I also missed a little more flexibility since my grandparents' stricter views were an influence on my parents. But despite these occasional frustrations, the warmth and support of a multi-generational home, filled with laughter, debates, and shared meals, enriched my life in ways I wouldn't trade for anything.

Ashley

I have two mums and wouldn't change that for the world. I have a great – and different – relationship with both of them. But dealing with other people's attitudes has been hard sometimes. I remember when I was young, I wanted to invite a friend to sleep over, and she wasn't allowed to do so for a while. Finally, her parents said that she could, but only if my mums promised not to kiss in front of her. I was also teased a lot at school, and Father's Day was always an awkward time. Over the years, it got easier because my mums both became really active in the school community, and once parents got to know them, they grew more accepting. Our family was also really active in the Pride community, so we knew a lot of gay couples. It was easier hanging out with their kids as having gay parents was normal for them. In fact, I remember one little girl crying when she first saw a straight couple kissing because she found it confusing. I think society is starting to change now, though. Gay families are more accepted, and so their kids have an easier time of it.

Leah

My parents divorced when I was a baby, and my mum left, so I grew up with just a dad. It didn't feel unusual until I started school and realised that most of the other kids had mums. Then I started wondering why I didn't have one. I felt unwanted and jealous of the other kids who had one. I was angry with my mum for leaving and my dad for not keeping her. The other problem was that he had to work long hours to provide for me, so he couldn't come along to school events like sports day and nativity plays. He was often too tired to spend time with me at home. I can't remember us ever playing, doing homework, or preparing a meal together. From a young age, I had to do things that my friends never had to do, like preparing meals and grocery shopping, so I certainly learned how to be independent. But at the same time, I was lonely and angry. However, as I got older, I realised how hard he worked to keep me in a comfortable life, and he inspired me always to try my hardest, too.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: Who grew up in a household with multiple generations living together?

- A. Jordan
- B. Ashley
- C. Leah
- D. None of them

Q2: Who experienced teasing and awkward situations because of their family setup?

- A. Jordan
- B. Ashley
- C. Leah
- D. All of them

Q3: Who became independent at an early age due to family circumstances?

- A. Jordan
- B. Ashley
- C. Leah
- D. None of them

Q4: Who felt a lack of privacy and flexibility at times?

- A. Jordan
- B. Ashley
- C. Leah
- D. All of them

Q5: Who says society is becoming more accepting of their family type?

- A. Jordan
- B. Ashley
- C. Leah
- D. None of them

Q6: Who grew up without a mother present?

- A. Jordan
- B. Ashley
- C. Leah
- D. None of them

How LED Lights Can Save Sea Turtles' Lives

Introduction to Sea Turtles

Sea turtles are amazing animals that have lived in our oceans for millions of years. However, today, they face many dangers. One of these comes from non-natural light. When baby sea turtles, also called hatchlings, come out of their eggs, they need to find the ocean quickly. They usually do this by following the natural light of the Moon and stars reflecting off the water. But in many places, artificial lights – from streets, buildings, and homes – are much brighter than the Moon. These lights can confuse baby sea turtles and make it hard for them to find their way to the ocean. This causes them to lose their way and head toward the land instead of the sea. When this happens, the baby turtles can get lost, dehydrated, or even be eaten by other animals.

Using Turtle-Friendly Lights

Although artificial light is usually a problem for sea turtles, we don't have to live in the dark to protect them. Research shows that using special artificial lights, placed low to the ground and slightly covered so they can't be seen from the beach, reduces the chances of sea turtles getting confused. These turtle-friendly lights are also better for people as they can improve visibility while driving by reducing the shine on the car windows. If you live near the coast or are visiting a beach where sea turtles live, you can help. Use lights that are not bright and low to the ground. Close curtains at night to reduce the amount of light coming from inside buildings.

LED Lights in Fishing Nets

Sea turtles have another enemy. Every year, hundreds of thousands of these sea animals are caught by large fishing boats in their fishing nets by accident – this means six to eight turtles daily for each boat in Mexico alone. Surprisingly, in this case, artificial lights can be helpful for sea turtles. Studies show that turtles use their sight to find food, but when swimming underwater at night, it's hard to see the fishing net. So, different organisations have developed fishing nets with LED lights. By adding lights to fishing nets, scientists have found a way to prevent turtles and other animals from getting caught in the nets, reducing the number of unwanted catches by 60% to 95% without lowering the amount of fish caught.

Benefits of LED Lights for Fishing Nets

Using LED lights on fishing nets doesn't just help sea turtles. When sea animals get stuck in the net by mistake, they might damage it. It costs time and money to remove sea turtles from their nets and to fix or replace the broken nets. In addition, LED lights are energy-efficient and last a long time. This new design of fishing nets reduces costs, making it a less expensive option.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: What do baby sea turtles usually follow to find the ocean?

- A. The Moon and stars
- B. Street lights
- C. Fishing nets
- D. Artificial lights

Q2: How can artificial lights help protect sea turtles?

- A. By attracting more turtles
- B. By reducing confusion for baby turtles
- C. By increasing the brightness of the moon
- D. By creating more moonlight

Q3: Where should turtle-friendly lights be placed?

- A. At the beach
- B. High above the ground
- C. Low to the ground and slightly covered
- D. In the ocean

Q4: How can artificial lights on fishing nets help turtles?

- A. By attracting more fish
- B. By confusing the turtles
- C. By preventing turtles from getting caught
- D. By scaring turtles away

Q5: What happens when sea animals get stuck in fishing nets?

- A. They help clean the nets
- B. The nets get damaged
- C. They find their way out
- D. They escape easily

Q6: Why are LED lights a good option for fishing nets?

- A. They attract fish
- B. They are expensive
- C. They are energy-efficient and long-lasting
- D. They make the nets heavier

How Sleep Transformed Professional Football

The Sleep Revolution in Football

A few decades ago, professional footballers spent their nights partying. Now, they are much more aware of the benefits of a good night's sleep. The change began in the mid-1990s, when mattress salesman Nick Littlehales contacted the manager of the Manchester United football team, Alex Ferguson, asking whether he had ever considered how sleep affected performance on the pitch.

Early Adoption by Top Teams

Interested, Ferguson arranged for Littlehales to give a presentation to his team. Before long, the whole team had new mattresses and pillows, and Littlehales soon became football's leading mattress advisor. In 1998, he supplied mattresses for England's World Cup team, and at the 2004 Euros, he created individual sleep routines for every player.

Scientific Evidence for Sleep Benefits

Gradually, club managers began to pay more attention to scientific sleep research, and for good reason. In 2011, sleep specialist Cheri Mah discovered that increasing sleep to 8-10 hours per night massively increased the speed and shot accuracy of basketball players. Other research shows that a single night of inadequate sleep can increase the risk of injury, and 64 hours of bad sleep reduces strength, power and balance, and can even cause the body to eat its own muscles!

Practical Applications by Clubs

Consequently, managers started trying to improve their players' sleep. Southampton Football Club's manager Alek Gross, for example, forbade his players from consuming caffeine, sugar or fatty foods, which prevent sleep, in the evenings. Instead, they were given milky protein drinks which made them tired. The Mexico team manager was also concerned about sleep loss when travelling to their World Cup group games in Russia. Together with Manchester United sports scientist Robin Thorpe, he drew up a sleep and training schedule to optimize performance.

Player Commitment to Sleep Routines

Even the hotel bedrooms were set to the ideal sleeping temperature. The players supported the routine. In fact, on the evening of a game, their captain Rafael Marquez even asked fans who were celebrating at the same hotel to keep quiet because the team were sleeping. The intervention was a great success. Mexico won their next game versus South Korea and even beat Germany in their group.

Individualized Sleep Solutions

Now, many teams and players are making an effort to improve their sleep patterns, using various means. Manchester City player Sergio Aguero, for example, was finding it hard to sleep because his muscular body prevented his legs from closing when he lay on his side. He got a new mattress which matched his height and weight, thus keeping his neck and back aligned in the night.

Sleep Solutions for Different Needs

Meanwhile, James Milner from Manchester City found it hard to sleep after evening games, so would play computer games into the early hours. As a result, he was too tired to train the following morning. Setting a routine with a late bedtime, early rise and afternoon nap helped to fix this problem. Since these interventions are cheap and effective, even the less well-known teams can benefit.

Accessible Technology for All Teams

Brentford, for example, has the smallest budget in the championship league. Even so, the club's head of performance, Chris Haslam, introduced wrist trackers to monitor player's sleep, and these have led to a clear improvement in players' attentiveness. Whereas in the past, playing after a party and a few hours' sleep was seen as a badge of honour, a good sleep is now considered an essential part of performance.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: What started the change in footballers' sleep habits?

- A. A scientific study about sleep and performance
- B. A mattress salesman contacting Alex Ferguson
- C. Players complaining about tiredness
- D. New rules about player rest periods

Q2: What did Cheri Mah's research show?

- A. Sleep has no effect on athletic performance
- B. More sleep improves speed and accuracy
- C. Footballers need less sleep than other athletes
- D. Sleep only affects mental performance

Q3: What did Southampton FC change about their players' evening routine?

- A. They introduced earlier bedtimes
- B. They replaced unhealthy foods with sleep-inducing drinks
- C. They made players sleep in special chambers
- D. They banned all evening activities

Q4: How did Mexico's team show their commitment to sleep routines?

- A. By traveling with their own mattresses
- B. By asking fans to be quiet so they could sleep
- C. By refusing to play evening games
- D. By sleeping in special tents

Q5: What problem did Sergio Aguero have with sleep?

- A. His muscular body made side-sleeping difficult
- B. He suffered from insomnia
- C. He preferred to sleep very little
- D. His mattress was too soft

Q6: How did Brentford improve their players' sleep on a small budget?

- A. By using wrist trackers to monitor sleep
- B. By buying expensive mattresses
- C. By hiring sleep specialists
- D. By building a special sleep center

American vs. British English and Cultural Differences

Banjo_Boy's Concerns

I was in the USA on a language course last summer. It was a fantastic learning experience! People were so friendly and welcoming. I'm going on a British summer course this year. I heard that English people are more unfriendly and polite. Is that true? I'm worried about the language as well. I learned American English at school, and I've heard that British English is different. I'm worried that I'll misunderstand everyone, make errors and appear impolite. Can anyone help?

Sara_May's Reassurance

Don't worry about the language! It's mostly the same. In terms of grammar, there are no differences at all. There are a few vocabulary differences though, like in the USA they say 'subway', 'gas' and 'apartment', while in Britain they say 'underground', 'petrol' and 'flat'. But it won't be a problem. You'll understand those unfamiliar words from the context. What's more, British people will understand you if you use American words. After all, they watch lots of American shows on television. The British accent is very different from the American one, but personally, I find it easier to understand.

Paulo_Riviera_166's Perspective

You won't find the language confusing, but people's behaviour is very different, in my opinion. Americans are more informal and open. They talk about anything – their money, their weight, their health. They are enthusiastic and friendly, and it's easy to get to know them. British people aren't like that. They don't like to talk about their personal lives until they know you well, and they think it is respectful to give you privacy. As a result, it isn't easy to make friends with British people. They are friendly and polite, but they often remain rather distant.

Nellie_111's Observations

Don't worry about making social errors in Britain. People are so polite that if you do something wrong, they won't comment! I agree with Paulo_Riviera_166 in some ways. British people are more distant, but they aren't more formal, in my opinion. For example, in the States, kids sometimes call their dads 'Sir', but British people never do that! In America, success is important, so people will often tell you how great they are. In Britain, it's considered rude to boast about your achievements. If you do, people may tease you or gossip about you. Also, British people hate being complimented. If you say something nice about them, they often look embarrassed and don't know what to say!

Bubbles' Experience

I don't know where Sara_May was staying in the UK, but I was in the north of the country on a school trip a couple of years ago. We all stayed with host families, and the only person I could understand was the mother of the family. I couldn't understand anyone else, even after three weeks! The people didn't sound anything like the people I had heard in my course books at school, and I learned British English! I guess people sound different in different areas of the country. All I can say is, good luck, and if you don't understand someone, ask them to write down what they are trying to say!

Comprehension Questions

Q1: What is Banjo_Boy's main concern about visiting Britain?

- A. The weather will be bad
- B. British people might be unfriendly and the language different
- C. The food will be strange
- D. The course will be too difficult

Q2: According to Sara_May, what is true about British and American English?

- A. The grammar is completely different
- B. There are no vocabulary differences
- C. British people won't understand American words
- D. The main differences are in vocabulary and accent

Q3: How does Paulo_Riviera_166 describe British people's behavior?

- A. Very open about personal matters
- B. Friendly but private until they know you well
- C. Rude to foreigners
- D. Always talking about their achievements

Q4: What does Nellie_111 say about compliments in Britain?

- A. People expect many compliments
- B. People know how to respond gracefully to compliments
- C. People often feel uncomfortable receiving compliments
- D. Compliments are considered very formal

Q5: What was Bubbles' main difficulty in Britain?

- A. Understanding regional accents
- B. Finding vegetarian food
- C. Using public transportation
- D. Making friends with locals

Q6: Which of these would be considered rude in Britain according to the text?

- A. Being quiet in public
- B. Boasting about your achievements
- C. Using American vocabulary
- D. Asking someone to repeat themselves

Memorabilia: What's the Thrill?

The Collector's Motivation

My friends wonder why I have an extensive collection of other people's clothes and shoes, old concert programmes and albums at home. They think I want to relive special moments in my childhood. That might be true for some collectors, but I'm not sentimental. You can make a lot of money from things that have a special place in history. Sports equipment like balls and shoes that were used in a great match, props from popular movies, clothes worn by famous people and first editions of books are all valuable, especially if they are signed.

Auction Investments

There are a few different ways you can find this sort of memorabilia. First, you can buy it at an auction. It's expensive, but if you are lucky, it will be worth it because memorabilia can suddenly increase in value, and you could make a lot of money. For example, a baseball signed by Babe Ruth sold for over \$77,000. In 2017, just four years later, a similar one sold for \$180,000, over twice as much! Imagine if you had enough money to buy that!

Fractional Ownership

I can't possibly buy that kind of memorabilia, but it is possible to buy part of it. Some companies look for rare items from around the world that they think will increase in value. People can buy a share of the memorabilia and buy and sell their shares over time. That's a great way to make money without spending a fortune, and for a little while, you can be the part-owner of a piece of history, although you can't take it home!

Alternative Acquisition Methods

If your goal is actually to own memorabilia, you can find some interesting items in second-hand shops. Sometimes, an old collector dies, and their spouse gives away their possessions without realising their value. You could also try to predict who will become famous in the future. Getting some shoes or a ball signed by someone who isn't famous yet is not too hard. Then you just have to wait until they do something spectacular. Then you have something really valuable! That's how I got a signed tennis racket from one of the world's top players!

Collection Pitfalls

I have been tricked before, though. I bought a signed record online a few years ago. A few years later, I tried to sell it at an auction house. When I gave it to the auctioneer, he rubbed the signature with his finger. It was smooth, not bumpy, so he knew it wasn't done with a pen. Someone probably printed it on. That was a pity. I'm also always careful to keep my memorabilia

in perfect condition. You can't just put it in a cupboard and leave it there. I once left some old concert programmes in a cupboard, and the paper curled and changed colour. Now I use special packaging and equipment to make sure the room doesn't get too hot, cold or damp. It isn't cheap, but you need it if you are serious about collecting.

The Uncertainty of Value

Of course, I never know which memorabilia will become valuable and which will not. I had some signed shoes from a great young basketball player, but then he had a bad injury and quit, so those shoes will probably never be worth much. Plus, the value of memorabilia goes up and down. A t-shirt signed by a popular celebrity could be worth a lot now, but its value might have halved in five years' time when that celeb is no longer famous.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: Why does the author collect memorabilia?

- A. To relive childhood memories
- B. Because they enjoy wearing famous people's clothes
- C. For potential financial gain
- D. To preserve historical artifacts

Q2: What happened to the value of Babe Ruth's signed baseball between 2013 and 2017?

- A. It decreased slightly
- B. It more than doubled
- C. It stayed the same
- D. It became worthless

Q3: How can people invest in memorabilia without spending a fortune?

- A. By buying reproductions
- B. By purchasing shares in valuable items
- C. By stealing from museums
- D. By borrowing from collectors

Q4: Where might someone find valuable memorabilia by accident?

- A. In government offices
- B. In second-hand shops
- C. In school libraries
- D. In grocery stores

Q5: How did the auctioneer know the signed record was fake?

- A. The signature was too perfect
- B. The signature wasn't bumpy
- C. The record was too new
- D. The signature was the wrong color

Q6: What can make signed memorabilia lose value?

- A. If the celebrity becomes more famous
- B. If the item gets older
- C. If the celebrity's fame decreases
- D. If too many copies exist

SpeedFlatmating

Introduction to SpeedFlatmating

When you are looking for rental accommodation in a shared house, you have to think not only about the location and your budget, but also about who you are sharing with, as your housemates can make the difference between a successful or an unhappy house-share. SpeedFlatmating is a perfect way to find the ideal house or flatmate. SpeedFlatmating events, which are organised by the website speedflatmating.co.uk, are mainly held in London. However, some events are held in other British towns and cities. They typically take place in a bar or pub.

How SpeedFlatmating Works

On arrival at a SpeedFlatmating event, guests are given a sticker to wear. White stickers indicate that you have an available room. Pink stickers are for people who are looking for a room. On white stickers, people write their name, the rental cost of the room and its nearest tube station. On pink stickers, people write their name, their budget and the area where they want to live. The website organises about 17 events per month in London. Their larger events cover the whole of central London and are geared towards people who are flexible about where they want to live. They also run local events for people who already know where they want to live.

Benefits of SpeedFlatmating

Users enjoy SpeedFlatmating for various reasons. Firstly, it cuts out the long, boring process of advertising and showing people around a flat. Also, potential flatmates can get to meet each other in a relaxed, social setting and find out whether they would be a good match for a flatshare or not. As well as meeting potential flatmates, many people say they enjoy the friendly atmosphere and make new friends at the events.

Paul's Experience

A huge number of people have benefitted from SpeedFlatmating. Paul from London says, 'I had been having problems finding a place to live in London because I'm in my forties. Most people sharing accommodation in London are in their twenties and thirties, and I didn't really fit in. I went to a SpeedFlatmating event and met three other people in the same situation as me, so we decided to get together and rent a place. Within a week, we had found a place within our budget.'

Melissa's Experience

Melissa says, 'I was just starting to think about moving out of my parents' home, and SpeedFlatmating seemed like a good way to find out more. I was quite nervous about attending

the event on my own, but when I got there, I realised that everyone else was nervous too, and so I was able to relax, enjoy myself and meet people. I met a landlord there who was looking for tenants, and I arranged to have a look round his house. I'm moving in next week! It was as simple as that!'

Comprehension Questions

Q1: What is the main purpose of SpeedFlatmating?

- A. To help people buy property
- B. To help people find suitable flatmates or accommodation
- C. To organize parties in London
- D. To teach people about renting laws

Q2: Where are most SpeedFlatmating events held?

- A. In government offices
- B. In bars or pubs
- C. In university campuses
- D. In shopping centers

Q3: What information is written on a white sticker at a SpeedFlatmating event?

- A. Name, budget, and preferred area
- B. Name, room price, and nearest tube station
- C. Age, occupation, and hobbies
- D. Phone number, email, and social media

Q4: What is one advantage of SpeedFlatmating mentioned in the text?

- A. It provides free accommodation
- B. It helps people avoid the long process of advertising a flat
- C. It guarantees you will find accommodation immediately
- D. It offers legal advice about renting

Q5: Why was Paul having difficulty finding accommodation before SpeedFlatmating?

- A. He had a very small budget
- B. He was older than most people sharing accommodation
- C. He wanted to live outside London
- D. He had pets that weren't allowed in most flats

Q6: How did Melissa feel before attending her first SpeedFlatmating event?

- A. Excited and confident
- B. Nervous but curious
- C. Angry and frustrated

D. Completely relaxed

The arm of Liberty

The arm of Liberty

The Statue of Liberty is probably the most famous icon of the USA. It was built to celebrate the end of slavery, and later became a symbol for freedom among immigrants. The statue depicts Libertas, the Roman goddess of liberty. And the torch she carries high above her outstretched arm represents a light that guides people along the path to freedom. Interestingly, however, Liberty looks different from the way the designer first intended. The idea for the statue came from a poet, Édouard de Laboulaye. When the American Civil war ended, he wanted to commemorate the end of the slave trade with a gift. He and other people who opposed slavery raised money and hired a sculptor, Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi, to design the statue. Bartholdi later employed the French engineer, Gustave Eiffel, to devise its structure. Eiffel, who would subsequently build the famous tower in Paris, was already a well-known designer of railway bridges. So he knew how to build robust structures that are flexible and safe in strong winds. This feature was necessary because the winds in New York harbor are extremely strong. Today, the top of her torch swings over 15cm when the wind is blowing at 50 miles per hour. Eiffel designed the statue to be built around a massive metal skeleton, similar to the Eiffel tower. Huge pieces of copper were fixed onto this to form its shape. Until recently, two copies of the plans were believed to exist. But recently, a third copy was discovered, which revealed some interesting information. In 2018, a map dealer bought some historic papers at an auction in Paris, which included original plans, calculations, and drawings of the statue. At first, the documents were too fragile to read. But after special treatment, the papers clearly showed that Eiffel's plans had been changed by Bartholdi with red ink. Liberty's arm, which was thick and vertical in Eiffel's drawing, was adjusted to be slimmer, less upright, and generally more attractive than Eiffel's design. The changes in the plans are dated July 28, 1882, after the construction of the tower had begun. We don't know what Eiffel thought of Bartholdi's changes. By then, Eiffel was working on other projects, and only his assistants were working with Bartholdi in New York. Maybe Bartholdi thought he could make the changes because Eiffel was not there and would not complain. However, the changes made the arm not only more attractive but also weaker, which has created problems over the years. At first, visitors could climb a ladder to the torch in Liberty's arm, but in 1916, there was an explosion on a nearby island. It damaged the statue and made it unsafe, and the stairway to the torch has been closed ever since. During restoration work in the 1980s, engineers noticed that the structure inside Liberty's head, shoulders, and arm were different from how they were shown on Eiffel's plans. They thought that the builders had made mistakes, but some historians believed that Bartholdi had changed Eiffel's design. The newly discovered papers confirm those theories.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: What was the original purpose of building the Statue of Liberty?

- A. To welcome immigrants to the USA
- B. To celebrate the end of slavery
- C. To commemorate the Eiffel Tower
- D. To honor Gustave Eiffel

Q2: Who first came up with the idea for the Statue of Liberty?

- A. Gustave Eiffel
- B. Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi
- C. Édouard de Laboulaye
- D. A map dealer in Paris

Q3: Why was Eiffel chosen to design the statue's structure?

- A. He was famous for designing tall towers
- B. He was experienced with flexible, wind-resistant structures
- C. He was already living in New York
- D. He had previously worked with Bartholdi

Q4: What did the newly discovered plans reveal?

- A. Eiffel had secretly changed the design
- B. Bartholdi altered Eiffel's original arm design
- C. The statue was meant to be taller
- D. The torch was supposed to be made of gold

Q5: What problem did Bartholdi's changes cause?

- A. The statue became too heavy to ship
- B. The arm became structurally weaker
- C. The torch could no longer be lit
- D. The statue swayed too much in the wind

Q6: Why is the stairway to the torch closed?

- A. It was never completed
- B. It was damaged in an explosion in 1916
- C. It is too narrow for visitors
- D. It was replaced by an elevator

The unhealthiest places in the world

The unhealthiest places in the world

According to a study by Clinic Compare, the unhealthiest country in the world is the Czech Republic. The study, which compared data on alcohol, tobacco consumption and obesity in 179 countries, found that Czech Republic residents are among the world's heaviest drinkers. Indeed, nine of the ten unhealthiest countries are located in Eastern Europe, where smoking is more common than in the rest of the world and is increasing among teenagers. The only one outside this region was the USA, where 36 per cent of the population are obese. Obesity levels are lower in the Czech Republic but are the highest in Europe. The study must be taken with a pinch of salt, however. According to the rankings, the healthiest country in the world is Afghanistan due to its low obesity and alcohol consumption. In second and third place are Guinea and Niger. But that doesn't make them healthy places to live. Indeed, four countries listed among Clinic Compare's top ten healthiest countries, Guinea, DR Congo, Malawi and Mozambique, were among the least healthy nations in another study, the Global Competitiveness Index. High consumption of alcohol, tobacco and food are diseases of affluence; that is, they are common in wealthy countries. However, many countries, especially in Africa, are still struggling with diseases of poverty. For example, the average life expectancy in DR Congo is just 53 years old. Here, many people die from diseases which could be treated in other countries. In Malawi, tuberculosis and HIV are common. These countries lack basic medical facilities and trained doctors. In Mozambique, where 30% of people cannot access health services, lack of nutrients in the diet is a far more common medical problem than overeating. Moreover, Nepal, listed by Clinic Compare as the fourth healthiest country, is the tenth most polluted country and Afghanistan the fourteenth. Air pollution is a killer, with 7 million people dying worldwide each year from diseases associated with it. It is not just vehicle fumes and industries which are the problem. Around 2.4 billion people worldwide are exposed to dangerous levels of household air pollution while cooking on fires or stoves fuelled by kerosene, wood, dung and coal. According to a different study, which measured factors such as the cost of staying healthy, life expectancy, air pollution, obesity, sunlight hours and crime rate, the healthiest country is Spain. This is most likely due to its traditionally healthy diet, clean air, the number of people walking to work (37%), and free healthcare. Interestingly, another study, the Global Health Security Index, ranks the USA as the healthiest nation. This was because its high standards in research, safety and communication allow it to detect and respond to pandemics the most effectively. This contrasts with the Clinic Compare survey, which ranked it the tenth unhealthiest country, primarily because of its high obesity rate. The countries with the highest levels of obesity, however, are in the Pacific islands. In countries such as Nauru, Tuvalu and Palau, over half the population is obese. This is a relatively new trend, as, before the 1950s, locals consumed a traditional diet that included bananas, coconuts, yams and seafood. Since then, incomes have increased, making imported convenience foods more affordable. This new scenario causes people to make poor food choices despite the availability of healthier, locally-grown options. In many regions of the USA, healthy choices just aren't available, or they are too expensive. In addition, this country's driving culture means that many people don't get enough exercise.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: What factor made the Czech Republic the unhealthiest country according to Clinic Compare?

- A. Its high obesity rate
- B. Its high alcohol consumption
- C. Its poor air quality
- D. Its lack of medical facilities

Q2: Why should the Clinic Compare rankings be viewed with caution?

- A. They ignore obesity rates
- B. They don't include African countries
- C. They rank some unhealthy countries as healthy
- D. They were based on only 50 countries

Q3: What are 'diseases of affluence'?

- A. Diseases that mainly affect poor countries
- B. Diseases caused by lack of nutrients
- C. Diseases common in wealthy countries due to lifestyle
- D. Diseases spread by pollution

Q4: Why is air pollution considered a serious global health issue?

- A. It only affects poor countries
- B. It kills millions of people worldwide each year
- C. It is caused mainly by obesity
- D. It can be completely avoided

Q5: What factor most likely explains Spain's ranking as the healthiest country in one study?

- A. Its low obesity rate and healthy lifestyle
- B. Its strict anti-smoking laws
- C. Its high number of hospitals
- D. Its absence of air pollution

Q6: What has contributed to high obesity levels in some Pacific island countries?

- A. A traditional diet rich in coconut and seafood
- B. Increased income leading to more imported processed foods
- C. Lack of any available food
- D. Government bans on local produce

Underwater Search for Lost Love

Yasuo and Yuko's Relationship

Yasuo Takamatsu met Yuko in 1988. Yasuo was a soldier and Yuko worked at a bank in Onagawa, Japan. They quickly fell in love. Yuko was gentle, modest, and enjoyed classical music and painting. On Friday, March 11, 2011, Yasuo drove Yuko to the bank. Later that day, a powerful earthquake hit the city, followed by a tsunami warning.

After the Tsunami

Yasuo was at a hospital with his mother when the earthquake happened. The main roads to Onagawa were blocked. He was driving back on the small back roads when Yuko texted, "Are you O.K.? I want to go home." The tsunami reached Onagawa at 3:20 p.m., destroying buildings and killing people. The next morning, soldiers arrived to search for bodies. Yasuo searched for Yuko every day from morning till evening until June when he started a new job. Then he searched on weekends, always hoping not to find Yuko's body.

Yuko's Phone and Continued Search

A month after the tsunami, Yuko's pink flip phone was found in the bank's parking lot. An unsent text from 3:25 p.m. read, "So much tsunami." Yasuo knew she had been alive until then. Other bank employees' bodies were found later. One was found six weeks after the tsunami, another in September 2011, but Yasuo still searched for Yuko.

The Decision to Search the Sea

By September 2013, after two and a half years of searching on land, Yasuo decided to search the sea. He contacted a dive shop to learn how to dive. The instructor, Masayoshi Takahashi, organised dives to clean tsunami rubbish. Yasuo believed Takahashi could help find Yuko. Yasuo told him, "I want to learn to dive to find my wife." On his first dive, the water was freezing. Yasuo was scared. He could have hurt himself or got caught by a rope, but that didn't worry him. The water wasn't clear, and that was the real danger. Takahashi told him not to touch the bottom to avoid moving the sand.

Searching for Emi and Narita's Dive

One day, Yasuo visited Masaaki Narita, who had lost his daughter, Emi, in the tsunami. Emi worked with Yuko at the bank. The women had gone to the bank's roof but were swept away by the massive wave. Yasuo felt sorry for Narita and offered to look for Emi too. But Narita decided to dive himself. In February 2014, Yasuo introduced Narita to Takahashi.

Narita's Dive and Continued Hope

In January 2016, Narita prepared for a dive. His wife, Hiromi, watched because she worried about him. The ocean was dangerous, and she didn't want to lose him too. Narita said, "If I die, throw my ashes in the sea." He dove, and after 35 minutes, resurfaced safely. Hiromi walked to her car and drove off. It was time to deliver rice balls and deep-fried chicken. Despite all these efforts, Yasuo continued his search for Yuko, holding on to hope.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: When did Yasuo meet Yuko?

- A. 1988
- B. 1991
- C. 2000
- D. 2011

Q2: What did Yasuo receive from Yuko in a text message during the tsunami?

- A. A photo
- B. A goodbye message
- C. An unsent text
- D. A warning to leave the city

Q3: When did Yasuo start searching for Yuko every weekend?

- A. March 2011
- B. June 2011
- C. September 2011
- D. June 2013

Q4: What did Yasuo do to help search for Yuko in the sea?

- A. He hired a professional diver
- B. He learned to dive
- C. He used a boat
- D. He waited for help

Q5: Who did Yasuo visit for advice about diving?

- A. Masaaki Narita
- B. Masayoshi Takahashi
- C. Emi's father
- D. His mother

Q6: How did Narita feel before diving?

- A. Excited
- B. Worried
- C. Angry
- D. Indifferent

Unusual and Wonderful Jobs

Chocolate consultant

If you love chocolate, becoming a chocolate consultant could be an exciting job. There are various types of chocolate consultants, so you can follow the best career path for you. You could work full-time with well-known brands or focus on smaller brands that specialise in specific types of chocolate. To be successful in this job, you must have a passion for chocolate and an interest in understanding the many varieties of cocoa. For this reason, you need a lot of knowledge in certain subjects. Chemistry and food-based subjects are particularly useful. Although you could work for companies that produce chocolate-based products, you could also be in charge of your career, advising chocolate buyers on which products to buy or running chocolate-tasting events.

LEGO sculptor

Many of us have enjoyed building things with LEGO blocks as children, but for some people, this childhood activity can turn into a career. LEGO has temporary jobs and long-term positions for certified professionals who create models and sets for the company. These LEGO sculptors work within specific themes and are based in Legoland Discovery Centres around the world. Becoming a LEGO sculptor is quite challenging. There are usually only between nine and 30 jobs available worldwide. To be hired, you need to successfully complete different tasks, including building difficult LEGO models.

Island caretaker

This role is often described as the best job in the world, and it's easy to see why! In 2009, the Queensland Tourism Board created a position to promote the Islands of the Great Barrier Reef. The lucky employee from the UK – chosen among thousands of applicants – earned £73,400 on a temporary job for six months, living on an island in the Great Barrier Reef. His job involved swimming, exploring underwater, and having fun while filming and blogging about his experiences. At the end of his contract, the British island caretaker was promoted to a new job as a Global Tourism Ambassador, representing Queensland tourism around the world.

Shark tank cleaner

Cleaning windows might not sound thrilling, but what if you did it in the water surrounded by sharks? That would be a different story, surely! Shark tank cleaners have to swim with sharks to make the tank's glass clean and shiny while visitors watch the whole process. This job requires a person who is not only brave but also a strong swimmer and experienced diver. Of course, if you're afraid of sharks, it might be safer to look for other opportunities!

Professional sleeper

If you love sleeping and can't get enough of it, why not turn that passion into a career? Professional sleepers often participate in sleep studies, but there are also more unusual opportunities. For example, in 2009, women were hired for a temporary job where they were paid to sleep as part of a 'living art' exhibit at The New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York while tourists visited the museum.

Comprehension Questions

Q1: Which job may require knowledge of chemistry?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D

Q2: Which job involves creating models for a toy company?

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. E

Q3: Which person got a job by competing against thousands of applicants?

- A. C
- B. A
- C. D
- D. E

Q4: Which job involves doing underwater cleaning?

- A. D
- B. C
- C. B
- D. E

Q5: Which job is done while visitors watch you sleep?

- A. E
- B. A
- C. B
- D. C

Q6: Which job requires passing challenging model-building tasks?

- A. B
- B. A
- C. D
- D. E

Q7: Which job offers the chance to run chocolate tasting events?

- A. A
- B. E
- C. D
- D. C

Q8: Which job involves being surrounded by sharks?

- A. D
- B. B
- C. A
- D. C