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Introduction

The purpose of this book
This is a practical guide to common problems in English grammar and usage. It is written for foreign students who would like to know more about English, and who want to avoid mistakes.

Level
The book is written especially for intermediate students, but more advanced learners may also find it useful. The explanations are made as simple as possible. Students who want more detailed and complete information should read my more advanced book Practical English Usage, also published by Oxford University Press.

Language
Explanations are mostly in ordinary everyday English. It has been necessary to use some grammatical terminology (for example, adverb, subject, clause, modify). These words are explained on pages 10–12.

The kind of English described
The book describes standard modern British English, and gives realistic examples of spoken and written language (both formal and informal). Incorrect forms are shown like this: ‘(NOT have seen him yesterday.)’ There is some information about American usage, but the book is not a systematic guide to American English.

Organization
This is a dictionary of problems, not a grammar. Points are explained in short separate entries, so that you can find just the information you need about a particular problem — no more and no less. Entries are arranged alphabetically and numbered. A complete index at the back of the book shows where each point can be found. (There is also a list of all the entries on pages 5–9).
How to use the book
If you want an explanation of a particular point, look in the index. Problems are indexed under several different names, so it is usually easy to find what you want. For example, if you need information about the use of I and me, you can find this in the index under 'I', 'me', 'subject and object forms', 'personal pronouns' or 'pronouns'.

Exercises
Basic English Usage: Exercises, by Jennifer Seidl and Michael Swan, gives practice in the various points that are explained in Basic English Usage.

Thanks
I should like to thank the many people whose suggestions and criticisms have helped me with this book, especially Norman Coe, Stewart Melluish, Jennifer Seidl and Catherine Walter. I am also most grateful to all those — too many to name — who have sent me comments on my book Practical English Usage. Their suggestions have helped me to improve many of the explanations in this book.

Comments
I should be very glad to hear from students or teachers using this book who find mistakes or omissions, or who have comments or suggestions of any kind. Please write to me c/o ELT Department, Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP.
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Words used in the explanations

**active**  In *I paid the bill*, the verb *paid* is active. In *The bill was paid*, the verb *was paid* is passive, not active.

**adjective**  a word like *green, hungry, impossible*, used to describe.

**adverb**  a word like *tomorrow, here, badly, also*, which is used to say, for example, when, where or how something happens.

**adverbial particle**  a word like *up, out, off*, used as part of a verb like *get up, look out, put off.*

**adverbial phrase**  a group of words used like an adverb. Examples: *in this place, on Tuesday.*

**affirmative**  I *was* is affirmative; I *was not* is negative.

**auxiliary (verb)**  a verb like *be, have, do*, which is used with another verb to make tenses, questions etc. See also modal auxiliary verbs.

**clause**  a structure with a subject and verb, and perhaps an object and adverbs. Examples: *I know that man. I came home last night.*

A sentence is made of one or more clauses. See also main clause.

**comparative**  a form like *older, faster, more intelligent.*

**conditional**  I *should/would + infinitive*, etc. See 88.

**conjunction**  a word that joins clauses. Examples: *and, so, if, when.*

**consonant**  *b, c, d, f and g* are consonants; *a, e, i, o and u* are vowels.

**contraction**  two words made into one. Examples: *don't, I'll.*

**determiner**  a word like *the, my, this, every, more*, which can come at the beginning of a noun phrase. See 96.

**direct object**  In *I gave my mother some money*, the direct object is some money; my mother is the indirect object.

**direct speech**  reporting somebody's words without changing the grammar. In *She said 'I'm tired';* the clause *I'm tired* is direct speech. In *She said that she was tired,* the structure is indirect speech or reported speech.

**emphasize**  You emphasize something if you make it 'stronger'—for example, by saying it louder.

**expression**  a group of words used together, like *in the morning.*

**first person**  *I, me, we, us, our, am* are first person forms.

**formal**  We use formal language when we wish to be polite or to show respect; we use more informal language when we talk to friends, for example. *Good morning* is more formal than *Hello,* *Hi* is very informal.

**gerund**  an *-ing form* used like a noun. Example: *Smoking is dangerous.*

**hyphen**  a line (-) that separates words. Example: *milk-bottle.*

**imperative**  a form (like the infinitive) that is used to give orders, make suggestions, etc. Examples: *Come on; Wait a minute.* See 170.

**indirect object**  see direct object.

**indirect speech**  see direct speech.

**infinitive**  In *I need to sleep and I must go,* the forms *to sleep* and *go* are infinitives. See 175.

**informal**  see formal.

**irregular**  see regular.
main clause  Some sentences have a main clause and one or more subordinate clauses. Example: When I got home I asked Mary what she thought. The main clause is I asked Mary; the other two clauses are like parts of the main clause (the first is like an adverb, the other is like an object): they are subordinate clauses.

modal auxiliary verbs  can, could, may, might, must, will, shall, would, should, ought and need.

noun  a word like oil, memory, thing, which can be used with an article. Nouns are usually the names of people or things.

object  See direct object and subject.

omission, omit  leaving out words. In the sentence I know (that) you don’t like her, we can omit that.

participle  When we use the -ing form like an adjective or verb, we call it a present participle. Examples: a crying child; I was working. Forms like broken, gone, heard, stopped are past participles. See 234.

passive  see active.

past participle  see participle.

perfect  a verb form made with have. Examples: I have seen; They had forgotten; She will have arrived.

phrasal verb  verb + adverb particle. Examples: stand up, write down.

phrase  a group of words that are used together. Our old house is a noun phrase; has been sold is a verb phrase.

plural  a form used for more than one. Books, they, many are plural: book, she, much are singular.

preposition  a word like on, through, over, in, by, for.

present participle  see participle.

possessive  a form like my, mine, John’s, used to show possession.

progressive  I am going, I was going are progressive verb forms; I go, I went are simple verb forms.

pronoun  We use a pronoun instead of a more precise noun phrase. Examples: I, it, yourself, their, one.

proper noun, proper name  a noun that is the name of a person, place etc. Examples: Peter, Einstein, Birmingham.

question tag  a small question at the end of a sentence. Examples: don’t you? wasn’t it?

regular  a regular form follows the same rules as most others. An irregular form does not. Stopped is a regular past tense; went is irregular. Books is a regular plural; women is irregular.

relative pronouns, relative clauses  see 277–280.

reported speech  see direct speech.

second person  you, yourselves, your are second person forms.

sentence  a complete ‘piece of language’. In writing, a sentence begins with a capital (big) letter and ends with a full stop (.). A sentence is usually made of one or more clauses.

simple  see progressive.

singular  see plural.
stress When we speak, we pronounce some words and parts of words higher and louder: we stress them. Example: There’s a man in the garden.

subject a noun or pronoun that comes before the verb in an affirmative sentence. It often says who or what does an action. Example: Helen broke another glass today. See also direct object.

subordinate clause see main clause.

superlative a form like oldest, fastest, most intelligent.

tense am going, went, will go, have gone are tenses of the verb go.

third person he, him, his, they, goes are third person forms.

verb a word like ask, play, wake, be, can. Many verbs refer to actions or states.

Phonetic alphabet

Vowels and diphthongs (double vowels)

i: seat /sæt/, feel /fi:l/

æ: match /ma:ʧ/, after /ɑ:ʧ(r)/
n: pot /pɒt/, gone /gɒn/
s: port /pɔ:t/, law /lɔ:/
ɔ: good /gʊd/, could /kʊd/
ʌ: food /fʊd/, group /gru:p/

3: turn /tɜ:n/, word /wɜ:d/
ə: another /ə'nʌðə(r)/
æ: take /teɪk/, wait /wet/
ai: mine /maɪn/, light /laɪt/
ɔi: oil /ɔɪl/, boy /bɔɪ/
ɔu: no /nəʊ/, open /'əʊpən/
au: house /haʊs/, now /naʊ/
ə: hear /hɪə(r)/, deer /dɪə(r)/
ə: there /θɛə(r)/, air /eə(r)/
ʌ: tour /tʊə(r)/

Consonants

p: pull /pʊl/, cup /kʌp/
b: bull /bʊl/, rob /rɒb/
f: ferry /'fɛrɪ/, cough /kɒf/
v: very /'verɪ/, live /lɪv/
θ: think /θɪŋk/, bath /bɑːθ/
ð: though /ðəʊ/, with /wɪð/
t: take /teɪk/, set /sɛt/
d: day /deɪ/, red /red/
s: sing /sɪŋ/, rice /rɪs/
z: zoo /zuː/, days /deɪz/
j: show /ʃəʊ/, wish /wɪʃ/
3: pleasure /'pleʒə(r)/
tʃ: cheap /tʃiːp/, catch /kætʃ/
dʒ: jail /dʒeɪl/, bridge /brɪdʒ/
k: king /kaɪŋ/, case /keɪs/
g: go /gəʊ/, rug /rʌɡ/
m: my /maɪ/, come /kʌm/
n: no /nəʊ/, on /ən/
ŋ: sing /sɪŋ/, finger /'fɪŋə(r)/
l: love /lʌv/, hole /həʊl/
r: round /raʊnd/, carry /'kærɪ/
w: well /wel/
j: young /jʌŋ/
h: house /haʊs/

' shows which part of a word is stressed. Example: /'lɪmɪt/.
1 abbreviations

We usually write abbreviations without full stops in British English.

Mr (NOT Mr.) = Mister
Ltd = Limited (company)
kg = kilogram
the BBC = the British Broadcasting Corporation
the USA = the United States of America
NATO = the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OPEC = the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

2 Some abbreviations are made from the first letters of several words. We usually pronounce these with the stress on the last letter.

the BBC /ðe bi:bi:/ the USA /ðe ju:es'ei/

Some of these abbreviations are pronounced like one word. We do not usually use articles with these.

NATO /'neitau/ (NOT the NATO)
OPEC /'oʊpek/ (NOT the OPEC)

2 about to

be + about + to-infinitive

If you are about to do something, you are going to do it very soon.

Don't go out now — we're about to have supper.
I was about to go to bed when the telephone rang.

For other ways of talking about the future, see 134–140.

3 above and over

Above and over can both mean 'higher than'.

A is above/over B.

The snow came up above/over our knees.
There's a spider on the ceiling just above/over your head.

2 We use above when one thing is not directly over another.
We've got a little house above the lake.

A is above B. (NOT A is over B.)
3 We use *over* when one thing covers another.

![Diagram](A is over B.)

There is cloud *over* the South of England.
And we use *over* when one thing crosses another. (*Across* is also possible.)

![Diagram](A is (moving) over/across B.)

*Electricity cables stretch over/across the fields.*
*The plane was flying over/across the Channel.*

4 We usually use *over* to mean 'more than'.

'How old are you?' *Over* thirty.
*He's over two metres tall.*
*There were over fifty people at the party.*

But we use *above* in some expressions, particularly when we are thinking of a vertical scale.

Examples are: *above zero* (for temperatures); *above sea-level*; *above average*.

션 For the difference between *over* and *across*, see 4.
For other meanings of *above* and *over*, see a good dictionary.

4 **across** and **over**

1 We use both *across* and *over* to mean 'on the other side of' or 'to the other side of'.

*His house is just over/across the road.*
*Try to jump over/across the stream.*

2 We prefer *over* to talk about a movement to the other side of something high.

*Why is that woman climbing over the wall?* (NOT . . . climbing *across the wall*)
3 We prefer *across* to talk about a movement to the other side of a flat area.

   *It took him six weeks to walk* **across the desert.**
   (NOT . . . *to walk over the desert.*

5 **across** and **through**

1 The difference between *across* and *through* is like the difference between *on* and *in.* *Across* is used for a movement on a surface. *Through* is used for a movement in a three-dimensional space, with things on all sides. Compare:

   - *We walked across the ice.*
   - *I walked through the wood.*
   - *We drove across the desert.*
   - *We drove through several towns.*

   - *I walked across the square to the café.*
   - *I walked through the crowd to the bar.*

2 People swim, and ships move, *across* rivers, lakes etc.

   *The river's* too wide to swim *across.*

   ▶ For the difference between *across* and *over,* see 4.

6 **active verb forms**

   This is a list of all the affirmative active forms of an English regular verb, with their names. For passive forms, see 238. For questions, see 270. For negatives, see 215. For irregular verbs, see 186.

   For more information about the forms and their uses, see the entry for each one. For details of auxiliary and modal auxiliary verbs, see the entry for each one.

   **future** *I will/shall* work, *you will* work, *he/she/it* will work, *we will/shall* work, *they will* work

   **future progressive** *I will/shall be* working, *you will be* working, etc

   **future perfect simple** *I will/shall have* worked, *you will have* worked, etc

   **future perfect progressive** *I will/shall have been* working, *you will have been* working, etc

   **simple present** *I* work, *you* work, *he/she/it* works, *we* work, *they* work
present progressive  I am working, you are working, etc

present perfect simple  I have worked, you have worked, he/she/it has worked, etc

present perfect progressive  I have been working, you have been working, etc

simple past  I worked, you worked, he/she/it worked, etc

past progressive  I was working, you were working, etc

past perfect simple  I had worked, you had worked, he/she/it had worked, etc

past perfect progressive  I had been working, you had been working, etc

infinitives  (to) work; (to) be working; (to) have worked; (to) have been working

particples  working; worked; having worked

Note: Future tenses can be constructed with going to instead of will (for the difference, see 136.3).

  I'm going to work; I'm going to be working; I'm going to have worked

7 actual(ly)

1 Actual means 'real'; actually means 'really' or 'in fact'. We often use them to correct mistakes and misunderstandings, or when we say something unexpected or surprising.

  The book says he was 47 when he died, but his actual age was 43.
  'Hello, John. Nice to see you again.' 'Actually, my name's Andy.'
  'Do you like opera?' 'Yes, I do.' 'Actually, I've got two tickets . . .'
  She was so angry that she actually tore up the letter.

2 Note that actual and actually are 'false friends' for people who speak European languages. They do not mean the same as, for example, actuel(lement), aktuell, attuale/attualmente. To express these ideas, we say present, current, up to date; at this moment, now, at present.

  What's our current financial position?
  A hundred years ago, the population of London was higher than it is now. (NOT . . . higher than it actually is.)

8 adjectives ending in -ly

1 Many adverbs end in -ly — for example happily, nicely. But some words that end in -ly are adjectives, not adverbs. The most important are friendly, lovely, lonely, ugly, silly, cowardly, likely, unlikely.

  She gave me a friendly smile. Her singing was lovely.
There are no adverbs friendly or friendlily, lovely or lovelily, etc. We have to use different structures.

She smiled at me in a friendly way. (NOT She smiled at me friendly.)
He gave a silly laugh. (NOT He laughed silly.)

2 Daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, and early are both adjectives and adverbs.

It's a daily paper. It comes out daily.
an early train I got up early

9 adjectives: order

Before a noun, we put adjectives in a fixed order. The exact rules are very complicated (and not very well understood). Here are the most important rules:

1 Adjectives of colour, origin (where something comes from), material (what it is made of) and purpose (what it is for) go in that order.

    colour    origin    material    purpose    noun
    red       Spanish leather   riding boots
    a Venetian glass ashtray (NOT a glass Venetian ashtray)
    a brown German beer-mug (NOT a German brown beer-mug)

2 Other adjectives come before colour-adjectives etc. Their exact order is too complicated to give rules.

    a big black cat (NOT a black big cat)
    the round glass table (NOT the glass round table)

3 First, last and next usually come before numbers.

    the first three days (NOT the three first days)
    my last two jobs (NOT my two last jobs)

▷ For and with adjectives, see 31.3. For commas with adjectives, see 266.1.

10 adjectives: position

adjective + noun
subject + copula verb (be, seem, look etc) + adjective

1 Most adjectives can go in two places in a sentence:

    a before a noun

    The new secretary doesn't like me.
    She married a rich businessman.
B after a 'copula verb' (be, seem, look, appear, feel and some other verbs—see 91)

That dress is new, isn't it? He looks rich.

2 A few adjectives can go before a noun, but not usually after a verb. Examples are elder, eldest (see 299.5) and little (see 309). After a verb we use older, oldest and small.

My elder brother lives in Newcastle. (Compare: He's three years older than me.)
He's a funny little boy. (Compare: He looks very small.)

3 Some adjectives can go after a verb, but not usually before a noun. The most common are ill (see 169), well (see 359) and afraid, alive, alone, asleep. Before nouns we use sick, healthy, frightened, living, lone, sleeping.

He looks ill. (Compare: He’s a sick man.)
Your mother's very well. (Compare: She's a very healthy woman.)
She's asleep. (Compare: a sleeping baby)

4 In expressions of measurement, the adjective comes after the measurement-noun.

two metres high (NOT high two metres)
ten years old (two miles long)

11 adjectives without nouns

We cannot usually leave out a noun after an adjective.

Poor little boy! (NOT Poor little!)

But there are some exceptions:

1 We sometimes leave out a noun when we are talking about a choice between two or three different kinds (of car, milk, cigarette, bread, for example).

'Have you got any bread?' 'Do you want white or brown?'
'A pound of butter, please.' 'I've only got unsalted.'

2 We can use superlative adjectives without nouns, if the meaning is clear.

I'm the tallest in my family. 'Which one shall I get?' 'The cheapest.'

3 We can use some adjectives with the to talk about people in a particular condition.

He's collecting money for the blind.

Note that this structure has a plural 'general' meaning: the blind means 'all blind people', not 'the blind person' or 'certain blind people'.
The most common expressions of this kind are:
the dead the sick the blind the deaf the rich
the poor the unemployed the young the old
the handicapped the mentally ill

(In informal speech, we usually say old people, young people etc
instead of the old, the young.)

These expressions cannot be used with a possessive 's.
the problems of the poor OR poor people's problems
(NOT the poor's problems)

▷ For expressions like the Irish, the French, see 212.

12 adverbs of manner

1 Adverbs of manner say how something happens.
Examples: happily, quickly, terribly, beautifully, badly, well, fast.
Don't confuse these adverbs with adjectives (happy, quick, etc.) We use
adverbs, not adjectives, to modify verbs.

verb + adverb

She sang beautifully. (NOT She sang beautiful.)
We'll have to think quickly. (NOT . . . think quick.)
She danced happily into the room. (NOT She danced happy . . .)
I don't remember that evening very well. (NOT . . . very good.)

2 Adverbs of manner can also modify adjectives, past participles, other
adverbs, and adverbial phrases.

adverb + adjective

It's terribly cold today. (NOT . . . terrible cold . . .)
This steak is very badly cooked. (NOT . . . bad cooked.)

adverb + adverb

They're playing unusually fast. (NOT . . . unusual fast.)
He was madly in love with her. (NOT . . . mad . . .)

3 Some adverbs of manner have the same form as adjectives.
Examples are fast (see 127), slow (see 308), loud, wide and hard (see
150).

▷ For the use of adjectives with 'copula verbs' like look or seem, see 91.
For adjectives ending in -ly, see 8. For the position of adverbs of manner, see
14.6. For spelling rules, see 327.
adverbs: position (general)

Different kinds of adverbs go in different positions in a clause. Here are some general rules: for more details, see 14. (Note: these rules apply both to one-word adverbs and to adverb phrases of two or more words.)

1 Verb and object

We do not usually put adverbs between a verb and its object.

- adverb + verb + object  
  I very much like my job.  
  (NOT I like very much my job.)

- verb + adverb + object
  She speaks English well.  
  (NOT She speaks well English.)

2 Initial, mid and end position

There are three normal positions for adverbs:

a. initial position (at the beginning of a clause)

Yesterday morning something very strange happened.

b. mid-position (with the verb — for the exact position see 14.2)

My brother completely forgot my birthday.

c. end position (at the end of a clause)

What are you doing tomorrow?

Most adverb phrases (adverbs of two or more words) cannot go in mid-position. Compare:

He got dressed quickly.  
He quickly got dressed.  
(Quickly can go in end or mid-position.)

He got dressed in a hurry.  
(Not He in a hurry got dressed.)

3 What goes where?

a. initial position

Connecting adverbs (which join a clause to what came before). Time adverbs can also go here (see 14.8).

However, not everybody agreed. (connecting adverb)

Tomorrow I’ve got a meeting in Cardiff (time adverb)

b. mid-position

Focusing adverbs (which emphasize one part of the clause); adverbs of certainty and completeness; adverbs of indefinite frequency; some adverbs of manner (see 14.6).

He’s been everywhere — he’s even been to Antarctica. (focusing adverb)
It will probably rain this evening. (certainty)
I've almost finished painting the house. (completeness)
My boss often travels to America. (indefinite frequency)
He quickly got dressed. (manner)

Adverbs of manner (how), place (where) and time (when) most often go in end-position. (For details, see 14.9.)

She brushed her hair slowly. (manner)
The children are playing upstairs. (place)
I phoned Alex this morning. (time)

14 adverbs: position (details)

(Read section 13 before you read this.)

1 Connecting adverbs

These adverbs join a clause to what came before.
Examples: however, then, next, besides, anyway
Position: beginning of clause.

Some of us wanted to change the system; however, not everybody agreed.
I worked without stopping until five o'clock. Then I went home.
Next, I want to say something about the future.

2 Indefinite frequency

These adverbs say how often something happens.
Examples: always, ever, usually, normally, often, frequently, sometimes, occasionally, rarely, seldom, never
Position: mid-position (after auxiliary verbs and am, are, is, was and were; before other verbs).

auxiliary verb + adverb
I have never seen a whale.
You can always come and stay with us if you want to.
Have you ever played American football?

be + adverb
My boss is often bad-tempered.
I'm seldom late for work.

adverb + other verb
We usually go to Scotland in August.
It sometimes gets very windy here.
When there are two auxiliary verbs, these adverbs usually come after the first.

- We have never been invited to one of their parties.
- She must sometimes have wanted to run away.

Usually, normally, often, frequently, sometimes and occasionally can go at the beginning of a clause for emphasis. Always, never, rarely, seldom and ever cannot.

- Sometimes I think I'd like to live somewhere else.
- Usually I get up early.
- (NOT Always I get up early. Never I get up early.)

But always and never can come at the beginning of imperative clauses.

- Always look in your mirror before starting to drive.
- Never ask her about her marriage.

For the position of adverbs of definite frequency (for example daily, weekly), see 8 below.

3 Focusing adverbs

These adverbs 'point to' or emphasize one part of the clause.

Examples: also, just, even, only, mainly, mostly, either, or, neither, nor

Position: mid-position (after auxiliary verbs and am, are, is, was and were; before other verbs).

- auxiliary verb + adverb
  - He's been everywhere—he's even been to Antarctica.
  - I'm only going for two days.

- be + adverb
  - She's my teacher, but she's also my friend.

The people at the meeting were mainly scientists.

- adverb + other verb
  - Your bicycle just needs some oil—that's all.
  - She neither said thank-you nor looked at me.

Too and as well are focusing adverbs that go in end-position. (See 28.) Either goes in end-position after not. (See 217.)

4 Adverbs of certainty

We use these adverbs to say how sure we are of something.

Examples: certainly, definitely, clearly, obviously, probably, really

Position: mid-position (after auxiliary verbs and am, are, is, was and were; before other verbs).
auxiliary verb + adverb

It will probably rain this evening.
The train has obviously been delayed.

be + adverb

There is clearly something wrong.
She is definitely older than him.

adverb + other verb

He probably thinks you don't like him.
I certainly feel better today.

Maybe and perhaps usually come at the beginning of a clause.
Perhaps her train is late.
Maybe I'm right, and maybe I'm wrong.

5 Adverbs of completeness

These adverbs say how completely something happens.
Examples: completely, practically, almost, nearly, quite, rather, partly, sort of, kind of, hardly, scarcely
Position: mid-position (after auxiliary verbs and am, are, is, was and were; before other verbs).

auxiliary verb + adverb

I have completely forgotten your name.
Sally can practically read.

be + adverb

It is almost dark.
The house is partly ready.

adverb + other verb

I kind of hope she wins.

6 Adverbs of manner

These adverbs say how, in what way, something happens or is done.
Examples: angrily, happily, fast, slowly, suddenly, well, badly, nicely, noisily, quietly, hard, softly
Position: most often at the end of a clause, especially if the adverb is emphasized. Adverbs in -ly can go in mid-position if the adverb is less important than the verb or object. Initial position is also possible.
He drove off **angrily**.
You speak English **well**.
She read the letter **slowly**.

**mid-position**

She **angrily** tore up the letter.
I **slowly** began to feel better again.

**initial position**

**Suddenly** I had an idea.

In passive clauses, adverbs of manner often go before the past participle. This is very common with adverbs that say **how well** something is done (for example well, badly).

**adverb + past participle**

Everything has been **carefully checked**.
I thought it was very **well written**.
The conference was **badly organized**.

7 **Adverbs of place**

These adverbs say **where** something happens.
Examples: **upstairs, around, here, to bed, in London, out of the window**
Position: at the end of a clause. Initial position also possible, especially in literary writing.

*The children are playing upstairs.*
*Come and sit here.*
*Don’t throw orange peel out of the window.*
*She’s sitting at the end of the garden.***

**At the end of the garden** there was a very tall tree.

Adverbs of direction (movement) come before adverbs of position.

*The children are running around upstairs.*

*Here and there* often begin clauses. Note the word order.

**Here/There + verb + subject**

*Here comes your bus.* (NOT *Here your bus comes.*)
*There’s Alice.*

Pronoun subjects come directly after *here* and *there*.

*Here it comes* (NOT *Here comes it.*)
*There she is* (NOT *There is she.*)

8 **Adverbs of time**

These adverbs say **when** something happens.
Examples: **today, afterwards, in June, last year, daily, weekly, every year, finally, before, eventually, already, soon, still, last**
Position: mostly in end-position; initial position also common. Some can go in mid-position (see below). Adverbs of indefinite frequency (often, ever etc) go in mid-position (see paragraph 2).

I’m going to London today.  
**Today** I’m going to London.

She has a new hair style every week.  
**Every week** she has a new hair style.

Time adverbs in -ly can also go in mid-position; so can already, soon and last. Still and just only go in mid-position.

So you **finally** got here.  
I’ve already paid the bill.

We’ll soon be home.  
When did you last see your father?  
I still love you.  
She’s just gone out.

9 Manner, place, time

At the end of a clause, adverbs usually come in the order manner, place, time (MPT).

I went there at once. (NOT I went at once there.)

Let’s go to bed early. (NOT early to bed)

I worked hard yesterday.

She sang beautifully in the town hall last night.

With verbs of movement, we often put adverbs of place before adverbs of manner.

She went home quickly.

10 Emphatic position

Mid-position adverbs go before emphasized auxiliary verbs or be. Compare:

She has certainly made him angry.  
She certainly HAS made him angry!

I’m really sorry.  
I really AM sorry.

‘Polite people always say thank-you.’  
‘I always DO say thank-you.’
11 Other positions

Some adverbs can go directly with particular words or expressions that they modify. The most important are **just, almost, only, really, even, right, terribly**.

*I'll see you in the pub **just before eight o'clock**.*

*I've read the book **almost to the end**.*

**Only you** could do a thing like that. I feel really tired.

He always wears a coat, **even in summer**.

She walked **right past me**. We all thought she sang **terribly badly**.

15 after (conjunction)

- **clause + after + clause**
- **after + clause, + clause**

1 We can use **after** to join two clauses.

We can either say: **B happened after A happened**

OR **After A happened, B happened**.

The meaning is the same: A happened first.

Note the comma (,) in the second structure.

*I went to America after I left school.*

**After I left school, I went to America.**

**He did military service after he went to university.**

(= He went to university first.)

**After he did military service, he went to university.**

(= He did military service first.)

2 In a clause with **after**, we use a present tense if the meaning is future (see 343).

*I'll telephone you **after I arrive**.* (NOT . . . **after I will arrive**.)

3 In clauses with **after**, we often use perfect tenses. We can use the present perfect (**have + past participle**) instead of the present, and the past perfect (**had + past participle**) instead of the past.

*I'll telephone you **after I've arrived**.

**After I had left school, I went to America.**

There is not usually much difference of meaning between the perfect tenses and the others in this case. Perfect tenses emphasize the idea that one thing was finished before another started.

4 In a formal style, we often use the structure **after + -ing**.

**After completing this form, return it to the Director's office.**

**He wrote his first book after visiting** Mongolia.
16 **after** (preposition); **afterwards** (adverb)

*After* is a preposition: it can be followed by a noun or an *-ing* form.

- *We ate in a restaurant after the film.*
- *After seeing the film, we ate in a restaurant.*

*After* is not an adverb: we do not use it with the same meaning as *afterwards*, *then* or *after that*.

- *We went to the cinema and afterwards (then/after that) we ate in a restaurant.*
  
  *(NOT . . . and after we ate in a restaurant.)*

17 **after all**

1 *After all* gives the idea that one thing was expected, but the opposite happened. It means ‘Although we expected something different’.

- *I’m sorry. I thought I could come and see you this evening, but I’m not free after all.*
- *I expected to fail the exam, but I passed after all.*

Position: usually at the end of the clause.

2 We can also use *after all* to mean ‘We mustn’t forget that . . .’. It is used to introduce a good reason or an important argument which people seem to have forgotten.

- *It’s not surprising you’re hungry. After all, you didn’t have breakfast.*
- *I think we should go and see Granny. After all, she only lives ten miles away, and we haven’t seen her for ages.*

Position: usually at the beginning of the clause.

18 **afternoon, evening** and **night**

1 *Afternoon* changes to *evening* when it starts getting dark, more or less. However, it depends on the time of year. In summer, we stop saying *afternoon* by six o’clock, even if it is still light. In winter we go on saying *afternoon* until at least five o’clock, even if it is dark.

2 *Evening* changes to *night* more or less at bedtime. Note that *Good evening* usually means ‘Hello’, and *Good night* means ‘Goodbye’ — it is never used to greet people.

  A. *Good evening.* Terrible weather, isn’t it?
  B. Yes, dreadful.
  A. Hasn’t stopped raining for weeks. Well, I must be going. *Good night.*
  B. *Good night.*
19 ages

1 We talk about people's ages with \[ \text{be} + \text{number} \]
   
   He \textit{is} thirty-five.
   
   She \textit{will be} twenty-one next year.

   or \[ \text{be} + \text{number} + \text{years old} \]

   He \textit{is} thirty-five \textit{years old}.

   To ask about somebody's age, say \textit{How old are you?} (What is your age? is correct but not usual.)

2 Note the structure \[ \text{be} + \ldots \text{age} \] (without preposition).

   When \textit{I was your age}, \textit{I was already working}.
   
   The two boys \textit{are the same age}.
   
   She's \textit{the same age} as me.

20 ago

1 Position

\[ \text{[expression of time + ago]} \]

I met her \textit{six weeks ago}. (NOT \ldots \textit{ago six weeks}.)

It all happened \textit{a long time ago}.

\textit{How long ago} did you arrive?

2 \textit{Ago} is used with a past tense, not the present perfect.

   She \textit{phoned} a few minutes ago. (NOT She \textit{has phoned} \ldots)
   
   'Where's Mike?' 'He \textit{was working} outside ten minutes ago.'

3 The difference between \textit{ago} and \textit{for}

   Compare:

   I went to Spain \textit{six weeks ago}. (= six weeks before now)
   
   I went to Germany \textit{for six weeks} \textit{this summer}. (= I spent six weeks in Germany.)

   
   \[ \text{NOW} \]

   \[ \text{PAST} \quad \text{for six weeks} \quad \text{I went to} \quad \text{I went to Spain} \quad \text{six weeks ago} \quad \text{FUTURE} \]
4 The difference between *ago* and *before*

*Two years ago* = two years before now
*Two years before* = two years before then (before a past time)

Compare:

*Two years ago,* I visited my home town, which I had left *two years before.*

For other uses of *before,* see 61–63.

21 *all (of)* with nouns and pronouns

1 We can put *all (of)* before nouns and pronouns.
   Before a noun with a determiner (for example *the, my, this*), *all* and *all of* are both possible.
   *All (of) my* friends like riding.
   *She's eaten all (of) the* cake.
   Before a noun with no determiner, we do not use *of.*
   *All children can be naughty sometimes.* (NOT *All of children* . . . )
   Before a personal pronoun, we use *all of.*
   *All of them* can come tomorrow.
   *Mary sends her love to all of us.*
   *All we, all they* are not possible.

2 We can put *all* after object pronouns.
   *I've invited them all.*
   *Mary sends her love to us all.*
   *I've made you all something to eat.*

22 *all* with verbs

*All* can go with a verb, in 'mid-position', like some adverbs (see 13.2).

1 **auxiliary verb + all**
   *am/are/is/was/were + all*
   *We can all swim.*
   *They have all finished.*
   *We are all tired.*

2 **all + other verb**
   *My family all like travelling.*
   *You all look tired.*
23 all, everybody and everything

1 We do not usually use all alone to mean 'everybody'. Compare:
   All the people stood up.
   Everybody stood up. (NOT All stood up.)

2 All can mean everything, but usually only in the structure all + relative clause (= all (that) . . . ). Compare:
   All (that) I have is yours (OR Everything . . .)
   Everything is yours. (NOT All is yours.)
   She lost all she owned (OR . . . everything she owned).
   She lost everything. (NOT She lost all.)

This structure often has a rather negative meaning: 'nothing more' or 'the only thing(s).

This is all I've got.
All I want is a place to sleep.

Note the expression That's all (= 'It's finished').

24 all and every

1 All and every have similar meanings. (Every means 'all without exception'.)
They are used in different structures:

   all + plural               every + singular
   All children need love.    Every child needs love.
   All cities are noisy.      Every city is noisy.

2 We can use all, but not every, before a determiner (for example the, my, this).

   all + determiner + plural                           every + singular
   Please switch off all the lights.                  Please switch off every light.
   I've written to all my friends.                    I've written to every friend I have.
   (NOT . . . every my friend.)

3 We can use all, but not every, with uncountable nouns.

   I like all music. (NOT . . . every music.)

We can use all with some singular countable nouns, to mean 'every part of', 'the whole of'. Compare:

   She was here all day (= from morning to night)
   She was here every day ( = Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday . . . )
At the beginning of negative sentences, we use these structures:

**Not all/every + noun + affirmative verb**

- **Not all** Scottish people drink whisky.
- **Not every** student passed the exam.

**No + noun + affirmative verb**

- **No** Scottish people work in our office.
- **None of** the students passed the exam.

For the use of no and none, see 221.

We do not usually use **all** and **every alone without nouns. Instead, we say all of it/them and every one.**

'She's eaten all the cakes. 'What, all of them?' 'Yes, every one.'

For the difference between **all** and **whole, see 25.**

For the difference between **every** and **each, see 104.**

**25 all and whole**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>all + determiner + noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>determiner + whole + noun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Whole** means ‘complete’, ‘every part of’. **All** and **whole** can both be used with singular nouns. They have similar meanings, but the word order is different. Compare:

- Julie spent **all the summer** at home.  
  **all my life**
- Julie spent **the whole summer** at home.  
  **my whole life**

2. **Whole** is more common than **all** with singular countable nouns.

   **She wasted the whole lesson.** (More common than . . . **all the lesson.**)

3. We usually use **all**, not **whole**, with uncountable nouns.

   **She’s drunk all the milk.** (NOT . . . **the whole milk.**)

   There are some exceptions: for example the **whole time; the whole truth.**

4. **The whole of or all (of) is used before proper nouns, pronouns and determiners.**

   - **The whole of//All of** Venice was under water. (NOT Whole Venice . . .)
   - I've just read the **whole of 'War and Peace'.**
   - (OR . . . **all of 'War and Peace.'**)
   - I didn’t understand the **whole of//all of it.**
26 all right

We usually write all right as two separate words in British English. (Alright is possible in American English).

Everything will be all right.

27 almost and nearly

1 There is not usually much difference between almost and nearly, and we can often use both with the same meaning.

I've nearly finished. I've almost finished.

Sometimes almost is a little 'nearer' than nearly.

2 We do not usually use nearly with negative words: never, nobody, no one, nothing, nowhere, no and none.

Instead, we use almost, or we use hardly with ever, anybody, etc. (See 150.2.)

almost never (NOT nearly never) hardly ever
almost nobody hardly anybody
almost no money hardly any money

28 also, as well and too

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>clause + as well</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>clause + too</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject + also + verb . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject + be + also + complement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 As well and too usually come at the end of a clause. They mean the same.

She not only sings; she plays the piano as well.
We all went to Brighton yesterday. John came too.

As well and too can refer to ('point to') different parts of the sentence, depending on the meaning. Consider the sentence: We have meetings on Sundays as well. This can mean three different things:

a (Other people have meetings on Sundays, and)

we have meetings on Sundays as well.
b (We go for walks on Sundays, and)
we have meetings on Sundays as well.

c (We have meetings on Tuesdays, and)
we have meetings on Sundays as well.

When we speak, we show the exact meaning by stressing the word that as well or too refers to.

'We have meetings on Sundays as well.'

2 Too and as well are often used in 'short answers'.

'She's nice. 'I think so too.'
'I've got a headache.' 'I have as well.'

In very informal speech, we often use Me too as a short answer.

'I'm going home.' 'Me too.'

In a more formal style, we would say I am too, or So am I (see 312).

3 We usually put also before the verb (for the exact position when there are auxiliary verbs, see 14.3).

'I don't like him. I also think he's dishonest.'
She sings, and she also plays the piano.

Also comes after am, is, are, was and were.

'I'm hungry, and I'm also very tired.'

Also can refer to any part of the sentence, like as well and too. We do not use also in short answers.

'I'm hungry.' 'I am too.' / 'So am I.' / 'Me too.' / 'I am as well.'

(NOT 'I also.')

4 Also + comma (,) can be used at the beginning of a sentence, to refer to the whole sentence.

'It's a nice house, but it's very small. Also, it needs a lot of repairs.'

5 We do not usually use also, as well and too in negative sentences. Instead, we use structures with not . . . either, neither or nor. (See 217.) Compare:

'He's there too. — He isn't there either.'
'I like you as well. — I don’t like you either.'
'I do too. — Nor do I.'

For the difference between also and even, see 114.3.
For as well as, see 51.
29 although and though

| (al)though + clause, + clause | clause, + (al)though + clause | clause + though |

1 Both these words can be used as conjunctions. They mean the same. Though is informal.

(A)though I don’t agree with him, I think he’s honest.
She went on walking, (al)though she was terribly tired.
I’ll talk to him, (al)though I don’t think it’ll do any good.

We use even though to emphasize a contrast. (Even although is not possible.)

Even though I didn’t understand the words, I knew what he wanted.

2 We can use though to mean ‘however’. It usually comes at the end of a sentence in informal speech.

‘Nice day.’ ‘Yes. Bit cold, though.’

▶ For the difference between even and even though, see 114.4.
For even though and even so, see 114.4, 5. For as though, see 49.

30 among and between

1 We say that somebody/something is between two or more clearly separate people or things.
We use among when somebody/something is in a group, a crowd or a mass of people or things, which we do not see separately. Compare:

She was standing between Alice and Mary.
She was standing among a crowd of children.
Our house is between the wood, the river and the village.
His house is hidden among the trees.

[Two cartoon images: one showing people standing between two others, the other showing a crowd of children]

BETWEEN

AMONG

2 We use between to say that there are things (or groups of things) on two sides.

a little valley between high mountains
I saw something between the wheels of the car.
3 We say *divide* *between* and *share* *between* before singular nouns.  
Before plural nouns, we can say *between* or *among*.

*He divided* his money *between* his wife, his daughter and his sister.
*I shared* the food *between/among* all my friends.

31 *and*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A and B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A, B and C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A, B, C and D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 When we join two or more expressions, we usually put *and* before the last. (For rules about commas, see 266.1.)

*bread and* cheese

*We drank, talked and danced.*

*I wrote the letters, Peter addressed them, George bought the stamps and Alice posted them.*

2 In two-word expressions, we often put the shortest word first.

*young and pretty cup and saucer*

Some common expressions with *and* have a fixed order which we cannot change.

*hands and knees (NOT knees and hands)*

*knife and fork bread and butter*

*men, women and children fish and chips*

3 We do not usually use *and* with adjectives before a noun.

*Thanks for your nice long letter. (NOT . . . your nice and long letter)*

*a tall dark handsome cowboy*

But we use *and* when the adjectives refer to different parts of the same thing.

*red and yellow socks a metal and glass table*

▷ Note: *and* is usually pronounced /ənd/, not /ænd/. (See 358.)

For ellipsis (leaving words out) with *and*, in expressions like *the bread and (the)* butter, see 108.2. For *and* after *try, wait, go, come etc*, see 32

32 *and* after *try, wait, go etc*

1 We often use *try and . . .* instead of *try to . . .*

*This is informal*

*Try and* eat something — you'll feel better if you do.
*I'll try and* phone you tomorrow morning.
We only use this structure with the simple form try. It is not possible with tries, tried, or trying.

Compare:

Try and eat something.
I tried to eat something. (NOT + tried and ate something.)

We usually say wait and see, not wait to see.

‘What’s for lunch?’ Wait and see.

2 We often say come and, go and, run and, hurry up and, stay and. This has the same meaning as come, go etc + infinitive of purpose (see 178).

Come and have a drink. Stay and have dinner.
Hurry up and open the door.

We can use this structure with forms like comes, came, going, went etc.

He often comes and spends the evening with us.
She stayed and played with the children.

33 another

another + singular noun
another + few + number + plural noun

1 Another is one word.

He’s bought another car. (NOT ... another car.)

2 Normally, we only use another with singular countable nouns. Compare:

Would you like another potato?
Would you like some more meat? (NOT ... another meat?)
Would you like some more peas? (NOT ... another peas?)

3 But we can use another before a plural noun in expressions with few or a number.

I’m staying for another few weeks.
We need another three chairs.

▷ For information about one another, see 105.
For more information about other, see 231.

34 any (= ‘it doesn’t matter which’)

Any can mean ‘it doesn’t matter which’; ‘whichever you like’.

‘When shall I come?’ Any time.’
‘Could you pass me a knife?’ Which one?’ It doesn’t matter. Any one.’
We can use anybody, anyone, anything and anywhere in the same way.

She goes out with anybody who asks her.

'What would you like to eat?' 'It doesn't matter. Anything will do.'

'Where can we sit?' 'Anywhere you like.'

For the use of any and no as adverbs, see 35.
For other uses of any (and some) see 314.

35 any and no: adverbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Any/no + comparative</th>
<th>Any/no different</th>
<th>Any/no good/use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1 Any and no can modify ( = change the meaning of) comparatives (see also 86.2).

You don't look any older than your daughter.
( = You don't look at all older . . . )

I can't go any further.
I'm afraid the weather's no better than yesterday.

2 We also use any and no with different.

This school isn't any different from the last one.

'Is John any better?' 'No different. Still very ill.'

3 Note the expressions any good/use and no good/use.

Was the film any good? This watch is no use. It keeps stopping.

36 appear

1 Appear can mean 'seem'. In this case, it is a 'copula verb' (see 91), and is followed by an adjective or a noun.

We often use the structure appear to be, especially before a noun.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>subject + appear (to be) + adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

He appeared very angry. (NOT . . . very angrily)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>subject + appear to be + noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

She appears to be a very religious person.

2 Appear can also mean 'come into sight' or 'arrive'. In this case, it is not followed by an adjective or noun, but it can be used with adverbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>subject (+ adverb) + appear (+ adverb/adverb phrase)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

A face suddenly appeared at the window.

Mary appeared unexpectedly this morning and asked me for some money.

For seem, see 291.
37 (a)round and about

1 We usually use round for movement or position in a circle, or in a curve.
   We all sat round the table.
   I walked round the car and looked at the wheels.
   ‘Where do you live?’ ‘Just round the corner.’

2 We also use round when we talk about going to all (or most) parts of a place, or giving things to everybody in a group.
   We walked round the old part of the town.
   Can I look round?
   Could you pass the cups round, please?

3 We use around or about to express movements or positions that are not very clear or definite: ‘here and there’, ‘in lots of places’, ‘in different parts of’, ‘somewhere near’ and similar ideas.
   The children were running around/about everywhere.
   Stop standing around/about and do some work.
   ‘Where’s John?’ ‘Somewhere around/about.’

   We also use these words to talk about time-wasting or silly activity.
   Stop fooling around/about. We’re late.
   And around/about can mean ‘approximately’, ‘not exactly’.
   There were around/about fifty people there.
   ‘What time shall I come?’ ‘Around/about eight.’

   Note: In American English, around is generally used for all of these meanings.

38 articles: introduction

The correct use of the articles (a/an and the) is one of the most difficult points in English grammar. Fortunately, most article mistakes do not matter too much. Even if we leave all the articles out of a sentence, it is usually possible to understand it.

   Please can you lend me a pound of butter till end of week?

   However, it is better to use the articles correctly if possible. Sections 39 to 45 give the most important rules and exceptions.
   Most Western European languages have article systems very like English. You do not need to study sections 39 to 41 in detail if your language is one of these: French, German, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic, Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Italian, Portuguese, Greek, Romanian. If your language is not one of these, you should study all of the sections 39 to 45.
   To understand the rules for the articles, you need to know about countable and uncountable nouns. Read 92 if you are not sure of this.
39 articles: a/an

1 A noun like house, engineer, girl, name refers to a whole class of people or things. We use a/an with a noun to talk about just one member of that class. (A/an means 'one'.)

   She lives in a nice big house.
   My father is an engineer. (NOT My father is engineer.)
   A girl phoned this morning. Tanaka is a Japanese name.

2 We use a/an when we define or describe people or things (when we say what class or kind they belong to).

   He's a doctor. She's a beautiful woman.
   'What's that?' 'It's a calculator.'

3 We do not use a/an with a plural or uncountable noun (see 92), because a/an means 'one'.

   My parents are doctors (NOT . . . a doctors -)
   Would you like some salt? (NOT . . . a salt:)

We do not use a/an with an adjective alone (without a noun). Compare:

   She's a very good engineer.
   She's very good. (NOT She's a very good -)

We do not use a/an together with another determiner (for example my, your).

   He's a friend of mine. (NOT He's a my friend.)

4 Note that we write another in one word.

   Would you like another drink? (NOT . . . an other drink?)

   ▶ For the exact difference between a and an, see 44.
   For the difference between a/an and the, see 41.
   For the use of some with plural and uncountable nouns, see 316.

40 articles: the

1 The means something like 'you know which one I mean'. It is used with uncountable (see 92), singular and plural nouns.

   the water (uncountable) the table (singular countable)
   the stars (plural countable)

We use the:

   a. to talk about people and things that we have already mentioned.
      She's got two children: a girl and a boy. The boy's fourteen and the girl's eight.

   b. when we are saying which people or things we mean.
      Who's the girl in the car over there with John?
c. when it is clear from the situation which people or things we mean.

Could you close the door? (Only one door is open.)
'Where's Ann?' 'In the kitchen.' Could you pass the salt?

2 We do not use the with other determiners (for example my, this, some.)

This is my uncle. (NOT the my uncle.)
I like this beer. (NOT the this beer.)

We do not usually use the with proper names (there are some exceptions — see 45.).

Mary lives in Switzerland. (NOT The Mary lives in the Switzerland.)

We do not usually use the to talk about things in general — the does not mean 'all'. (See 42.)

Books are expensive. (NOT The books are expensive.)

For the pronunciation of the, see 44.

41 articles: the difference between a/an and the

Very simply:

a/an just means 'one of a class'
the means 'you know exactly which one'.

Compare:

A doctor must like people. (= any doctor, any one of that profession)
My brother's a doctor. (= one of that profession)
I'm going to see the doctor. (= you know which one: my doctor)
I live in a small flat at the top of an old house near the town hall.
(a small flat: there might be two or three at the top of the house — it could be any one of these.
an old house: there are lots near the town hall — it could be any one.
the top: we know which top: it's the top of the house where the person lives — a house only has one top.
the town hall: we know exactly which town hall is meant: there's only one in the town.)

42 articles: talking in general

1 We do not use the with uncountable or plural nouns (see 92) to talk about things in general — to talk about all books, all people or all life, for example. The never means 'all'. Compare:

Did you remember to buy the books? (= particular books which I asked you to buy)
Books are expensive. (NOT The books are expensive. We are talking about books in general — all books.)
I'm studying the life of Beethoven. (= one particular life)
Life is hard. (NOT The life . . . . This means 'all life'.)
'Where's the cheese?' 'I ate it.'
Cheese is made from milk.
Could you put the light on?
Light travels at 300,000 km a second.

2 Sometimes we talk about things in general by using a singular noun as an example. We use a/an with the noun (meaning 'any').

A baby deer can stand as soon as it is born.
A child needs plenty of love.

We can also use the with a singular countable noun in generalizations (but not with plural or uncountable nouns — see 1 above). This is common with the names of scientific instruments and inventions, and musical instruments.

Life would be quieter without the telephone.
The violin is more difficult than the piano.

3 These common expressions have a general meaning: the town, the country, the sea, the seaside, the mountains, the rain, the wind, the sun(shine).

I prefer the mountains to the sea. I hate the rain.
Would you rather live in the town or the country?
We usually go to the seaside for our holidays.
I like lying in the sun(shine). I like the noise of the wind.

43 articles: countable and uncountable nouns

A singular countable noun (see 92) normally has an article or other determiner with it. We can say a cat, the cat, my cat, this cat, any cat, either cat or every cat, but not just cat. (There are one or two exceptions — see 45.) Plural and uncountable nouns can be used without an article or determiner, or with the. They cannot be used with a (because it means 'one').

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a/an</th>
<th>the</th>
<th>no article</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>singular countable</td>
<td>a cat</td>
<td>the cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural countable</td>
<td>the cats</td>
<td>cats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncountable</td>
<td>the water</td>
<td>water</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See diagram overleaf
Which article do you use with a noun 'X'?

Are we talking about all X or all X's?

NO

Does the hearer know exactly which X or X's we are talking about?

NO

Is X a countable noun?

NO

YES

Is X a plural noun?

YES

THE X or X's

NO

A/AN X

SOME X or X's

X or X's (no article)

For the difference between X and some X, see 316. For exceptions, see 45.

44 articles: a and an; pronunciation of the

1 We do not usually pronounce /a:/ before a vowel (a, e, i, o, u). So before a vowel, the article a (/a/) changes to an, and the changes its pronunciation from /ðeɪ/ to /ðiː/. Compare:

- a rabbit  an elephant  the sea /ðiː 'siː/  the air /ðiː 'eə/

2 We use an and the /ðiː/ before a vowel sound — a pronounced vowel — even if it is written as a consonant.

- an hour /an 'auə/  the hour /θiː 'auə/  (the h in hour is not pronounced)
- an MP /an em'piː/  the MP /ðiː em'piː/  (the name of the letter M is pronounced /em/)

We use a and the /ðeɪ/ before a consonant sound, even if it is written as a vowel.

- a university /ə juːnɪvɜːsəti/  the university /ðe juːnɪvɜːsəti/
- a one-pound note

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articles: special rules and exceptions

1 Common expressions without articles

Articles are not used in these expressions:

to school  at school  from school  to/at/from university/college
to/at/in/into/from church  to/in/into/out of bed/prison/hospital
to/at/from work  to/at sea  to/in/from town  at/from home
for/at/to breakfast/lunch/dinner/supper  at night
by car/bus/bicycle/plane/train/tube/boat
on foot  go to sleep  watch television (TV)  on TV

2 Possessives

A noun that is used after a possessive (like John's, America's), has no article.

John's coat  (NOT the John's coat)
America's economic problems  (NOT the America's economic problems)

3 Musical instruments

We usually use the article the when we talk in general about a musical instrument. (See 42.2.)

I'd like to learn the piano.

But the is not used when we talk about jazz or pop music.

This recording was made with Miles Davis on trumpet

4 all and both

We sometimes leave out the after both, and after all when there is a number.

Both (the) children are good at maths.
All (the) eight students passed the exam.

We can say all day, all night, all week, all summer/winter, all year, without the.

I've been waiting for you all day.

5 Seasons

We can say in spring or in the spring, in summer or in the summer, etc.

There is little difference.

6 Jobs and positions

We use the article with the names of jobs.

My sister is a doctor.  (NOT My sister is doctor.)

But the is not used in titles like Queen Elizabeth, President Lincoln.
7 Exclamations

We use a/an in exclamations after what, with singular countable nouns.

What a lovely dress! (NOT What lovely dress!)  

8 Nature

We often use the with the words town, country, sea, seaside and mountains, even when we are talking in general. The same happens with wind, rain, snow and sun(shine). (See 42.3.)

Do you prefer the town or the country?
I love the mountains.
I like the noise of the wind.
She spends her time lying in the sun.

9 Place-names

We usually use the with these kinds of place-names:

- seas (the Atlantic)
- mountain groups (the Himalayas)
- island groups (the West Indies)
- rivers (the Rhine)
- deserts (the Sahara)
- hotels (the Grand Hotel)
- cinemas and theatres (the Odeon, the Playhouse)
- museums and art galleries (the British Museum, the Tate)

We usually use no article with:

- continents, countries, states, counties, departments etc (Africa, Brazil, Texas, Berkshire, Westphalia)
- towns (Oxford)
- streets (New Street)
- lakes (Lake Michigan)

Exceptions: countries whose name contains a common noun like republic, state(s), union (the People's Republic of China, the USA, the USSR). Note also the Netherlands, and its seat of government the Hague.

We do not usually use the with the names of the principal buildings of a town.

- Oxford University (NOT the Oxford University)
- Oxford Station (NOT the Oxford Station)
- Salisbury Cathedral
- Birmingham Airport
- Bristol Zoo

Names of single mountains vary — some have articles, some do not (Everest, the Matterhorn).
10 Newspapers

The names of newspapers usually have *the*.

*The Times*,  *The Washington Post*

Most names of magazines do not have *the*.

*Punch*,  *New Scientist*

11 Special styles

We leave out articles in some special ways of writing.

- **newspaper headlines**: MAN KILLED ON MOUNTAIN
- **notices, posters etc**: SUPER CINEMA, RITZ HOTEL
- **telegrams**: WIFE ILL MUST CANCEL HOLIDAY
- **instructions**: Open packet at other end
- **dictionary entries**: palm inner surface of hand between wrist and fingers
- **lists**: take car to garage; buy buttons; pay phone bill
- **notes**: J. thinks company needs new office

For the use of articles with abbreviations (NATO, the USA), see 1.
For the use of *the* in double comparatives (*the more, the better*), see 85.4.
For *a* with *few* and *little*, see 129.
For *a* with *hundred*, *thousand* etc, see 227.8.

46 *as ... as ...*

\[
\text{as} + \text{adjective} + \text{as} \quad \text{+ noun/pronoun/clause}
\]

1 We use *as ... as ...* to say that two things are the same in some way.

*She's as tall as her brother.*

*Can a man run as fast as a horse?*

*It's not as good as I expected.*

2 We can use object pronouns (*me, him etc*) after *as*, especially in an informal style. (See 331.4.)

*She doesn't sing as well as me.*

In a formal style, we use subject + verb.

*She doesn't sing as well as I do.*

3 After *not*, we can use *... as ...* or *so ... as ...*

*She's not as/so pretty as her sister.*
4 Note the structure half as . . . as . . .; twice as . . . as . . .; three times as . . . as . . .; etc.

The green one isn't half as good as the blue one.
A colour TV is twice as expensive as a black and white.

For as much/many as . . ., see 50.
For as soon as . . ., see 343.1.
For as well as . . ., see 51.

17 as, because and since (reason)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{as/because/since + clause + clause} \\
\text{clause + as/because/since + clause}
\end{array}
\]

1 Because is used when we give the reason for something.

Because I was ill for six months I lost my job.

If the reason is the most important idea, we put it at the end of the sentence.

Why am I leaving? I'm leaving because I'm fed up!

2 As and since are used when the reason is not the most important idea in the sentence, or when it is already known. Since is more formal. As- and since-clauses often come at the beginning of the sentence.

As it's raining again, we shall have to stay at home.
Since he had not paid his bill, his electricity was cut off.

48 as and like

1 Similarity

We can use like or as to say that things are similar.

a Like is a preposition. We use like before a noun or pronoun.

\[
\text{like + noun/pronoun}
\]

You look like your sister. (NOT . . . as your sister.)
He ran like the wind. It's like a dream.
She's dressed just like me.

We use like to give examples.

He's good at some subjects, like mathematics.
(NOT . . . as mathematics.)
In mountainous countries, like Switzerland.
As is a conjunction. We use as before a clause, and before an expression beginning with a preposition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>as + clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>as + preposition phrase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nobody knows her as I do.
We often drink tea with the meal, as they do in China.
In 1939, as in 1914, everybody wanted war.
On Friday, as on Tuesday, the meeting will be at 8.30.

In informal English like is often used instead of as.
This is very common in American English.

Nobody loves you like I do.

For like = as if, see 49.3.
For as . . . as, see 46. For the same as, see 288.

2 Function

We use as, not like, to say what function a person or thing has — what jobs people do, what things are used for, etc.

He worked as a waiter for two years. (NOT . . . like a waiter.)
Please don't use your plate as an ashtray.

49 as if and as though

| as if/though + subject + present/past verb |
| as if/though + subject + past verb with present meaning |

1 As if and as though mean the same.
We use them to say what a situation seems like.

It looks as if/though it's going to rain.
I felt as if/though I was dying.

2 We can use a past tense with a present meaning after as if/though. This means that the idea is 'unreal'.
Compare:

He looks as if he's rich. (Perhaps he is rich.)
She talks as if she was rich. (But she isn't.)

We can use were instead of was when we express 'unreal' ideas after as if/though. This is common in a formal style.

She talks as if she were rich.

3 Like is often used instead of as if/though, especially in American English.
This is very informal.

It looks like it's going to rain.
50  as much/many ... as ...

We use as much ... as ... with a singular (uncountable) noun, and as many ... as ... with a plural. Compare:

We need as much time as possible.
We need as many cars as possible.
As much/many can be used without a following noun.

I ate as much as I wanted. Rest as much as possible.
'Can I borrow some books?' 'Yes, as many as you like.'

51  as well as

noun/adjective/adverb + as well as + noun/adjective/adverb
clause + as well as -ing ...
As well as -ing ... + clause

1  As well as has a similar meaning to 'not only ... but also'.

He's got a car as well as a motorbike.
She's clever as well as beautiful.

2  When we put a verb after as well as, we use the -ing form.
Smoking is dangerous, as well as making you smell bad.
As well as breaking his leg, he hurt his arm.
(NOT As well as he broke his leg ...)

Note the difference between:

She sings as well as playing the piano. (= She not only plays, but also sings.)
She sings as well as she plays the piano. (= Her singing is as good as her playing.)

52  as, when and while (things happening at the same time)

1  As/When/While A was happening, B happened.
B happened as/when/while A was happening.

As/When/While A was happening

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

B

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

B happened.
We can use *as, when, or while* to say that a longer action or event was going on when something else happened. We usually use the past progressive tense (was/were + ... -ing) for the longer action or event (see 242).

- **As I was walking** down the street I saw Joe driving a Porsche.
  - The telephone rang *when I was having* a bath.
  - While they were playing cards, somebody broke into the house.

As, when, and while can be used in the same way with present tenses.

- Please don't interrupt me *when I'm speaking*. I often get good ideas *while I'm shaving*.

2. **While A was happening, B was happening.**
   **While A happened, B happened.**

   While A was happening/happened
   
   AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
   BBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBB

   B was happening/happened.

   We usually use *while* to say that two long actions or events went on at the same time.
   - We can use the past progressive or the simple past.

     - **While you were reading** the paper, I was working.
     - John *cooked* supper while I *watched* TV.

     Present tenses are also possible.

     - After supper, I *wash up* while Mary puts the children to bed.

3. **As A happened, B happened.**
   **B happened, as A happened.**

   As A happened
   
   A
   
   B
   
   B happened.

   We can use *as* to say that two short actions or events happened at the same time.

   - As I opened my eyes I heard a strange voice.
     - The doorbell rang just *as* I picked up the phone.
53 ask

1 Ask for: ask somebody to give something
   Ask without for: ask somebody to tell something

   Don't ask me for money. (NOT Don't ask me money.)
   Don't ask me my name. (NOT Don't ask me for my name.)

   Ask for the menu.
   Ask the price.

2 When there are two objects, the indirect object (the person) comes first,
   without a preposition.

   I'll ask [that man 1] the time. [2]
   (NOT I'll ask the time to that man.)

3 We can use ask with just one object (direct or indirect).

   Ask him. Ask his name.

4 We can use infinitive structures after ask.

   ask + infinitive
   I asked to go home. (= I said I wanted to go home.)
   ask + object + infinitive
   I asked John to go home. (= I said I wanted John to go home.)
   ask + for + noun/pronoun + passive infinitive
   I asked for the parcel to be sent to my home address.

54 at, in, and on (place)

1 At is used to talk about position at a point.

   It's very hot at the centre of the earth.
   Turn right at the next traffic-lights.

   Sometimes we use at with a larger place, if we just think of it as a point:
   a point on a journey, a meeting place, or the place where something
   happens.

   You have to change trains at Didcot.
   The plane stops for an hour at Frankfurt.
   Let's meet at the station.
   There's a good film at the cinema in Market Street.
2 On is used to talk about position on a line.
   His house is on the way from Aberdeen to Dundee.
   Stratford is on the River Avon.

On is also used for position on a surface.
   Come on — supper's on the table!
   I'd prefer that picture on the other wall.
   There's a big spider on the ceiling.

3 In is used for position in a three-dimensional space (when something is surrounded on all sides).
   I don't think he's in his office.
   Let's go for a walk in the woods.
   I last saw her in the car park.

4 We say on (and off) for buses, planes and trains.
   He's arriving on the 3.15 train.
   There's no room on the bus; let's get off again.

5 In addresses, we use at if we give the house number.
   She lives at 73 Albert Street.
   We use in if we just give the name of the street.
   She lives in Albert Street.
   We use on for the number of the floor.
   She lives in a flat on the third floor.

6 Learn these expressions:
   in a picture    in the sky    on a page
   in bed/hospital/prison/church
   at home/school/work/university/college

▷ Note that at is usually pronounced /æt/, not /æt/. (See 358.)

55 at, in and on (time)

| at         | exact time                      |
| in         | part of day                     |
| on         | particular day                  |
| at         | weekend, public holiday         |
| in         | longer period                   |

1 Exact times
   I usually get up at six o'clock. I'll meet you at 4.15.
   Phone me at lunch time.
In informal English, we say *What time . . . ?*

(*At what time . . . ?* is correct, but unusual.)

*What time* does your train leave?

2 Parts of the day

*I work best in the morning.*

*three o'clock in the afternoon*

*We usually go out in the evening.*

Exception: *at night.*

We use *on* if we say which morning/afternoon/etc we are talking about, or if we describe the morning/afternoon/etc.

*See you on Monday morning.*

*It was on a cold afternoon in early spring.*

3 Days

*I’ll phone you on Tuesday.*

*My birthday’s on March 21st.*

*They’re having a party on Christmas Day.*

In informal speech we sometimes leave out *on*.

(This is very common in American English.)

*I’m seeing her Sunday morning.*

Note the use of plurals (*Sundays, Mondays* etc) when we talk about repeated actions.

*We usually go to see Granny on Sundays.*

4 Weekends and public holidays

We use *at* to talk about the whole of the holidays at Christmas, New Year, Easter and Thanksgiving (US).

*Are you going away at Easter?*

We use *on* to talk about one day of the holiday.

*It happened on Easter Monday.*

British people say *at the weekend*; Americans use *on*.

*What did you do at the weekend?*

5 Longer periods

*It happened in the week after Christmas.*

*I was born in March.*

*Kent is beautiful in spring.*

*He died in 1616.*

*Our house was built in the 15th Century.*
Expressions without preposition

Prepositions are not used in expressions of time before next, last, this, one, any, each, every, some, all.

See you next week. Are you free this morning?
Let's meet one day. Come any time.
I'm at home every evening. We stayed all day.

Prepositions are not used before yesterday, the day before yesterday, tomorrow, the day after tomorrow.

What are you doing the day after tomorrow?

Note that at is usually pronounced /æt/, not /æt/ (see 358).

56 at all

1 We often use at all to emphasize a negative.
   I don't like her at all. (= I don't like her even a little.)
   This restaurant is not at all expensive.

2 We also use at all with hardly; in questions; and after if.
   She hardly eats anything at all.
   Do you sing at all? (= even a little?)
   I'll come in the morning if I come at all. (= Perhaps I won't come.)

3 We can say Not at all as a polite answer to Thank you. (See 249.4.)

57 be with auxiliary do

\[
\begin{align*}
do + \text{be} + \text{adjective/noun} \\
don't + \text{be} + \text{adjective/noun}
\end{align*}
\]

1 Don't be . . . is used to give people advice or orders.
   Don't be afraid. Don't be a fool!
   In affirmative sentences, we usually just use Be . . .
   Be careful!
   But Do be . . . is used for emphasis.
   Do be careful, please!!!
   Do be quiet, for God's sake!

2 In other cases, we do not use do with be.
   I am not often lonely. (NOT + do not often be lonely.)
58 be + infinitive

\[ I \text{ am to . . . you are to . . . etc} \]

1 We use this structure in a formal style to talk about plans and arrangements, especially when they are official.

The President \textit{is to visit} Nigeria next month.
We \textit{are to get} a 10 per cent wage rise in June.

2 We also use the structure to give orders. Parents often use it to children.

You \textit{are to eat} all your supper before you watch TV.
She can go to the party, but she's \textit{not to be} back late.

3 You can often see \textit{be} + passive infinitive in notices and instructions.

\[(\text{noun } + \text{ is}) + \text{ passive infinitive } (= \text{ to be } + \text{ past participle})\]

(This form is) \textit{to be filled in} in ink.

Sometimes \textit{be} is omitted.

\textit{To be taken} three times a day after meals. (on a medicine bottle)

▷ For other ways of talking about the future, see 134–140

59 be: progressive tenses

\[ I \text{ am being / you are being etc + adjective/noun} \]

We can use this structure to talk about what people are/were doing, but not usually to say how they are/were feeling. Compare:

\textit{You're being} stupid. (= You're doing stupid things.)
\textit{I was being} very careful. (= I was doing something carefully.)

\textit{I'm happy} just now. (NOT \textit{I was being happy} just now.)
\textit{I was} very depressed when you phoned.
(NOT \textit{I was being very depressed} . . . )

▷ For the use of \textit{am being} etc in passive verb forms, see 238.

60 because and because of

\begin{align*}
\text{clause} + \text{ because } + \text{ clause} \\
\text{because} + \text{ clause, + clause} \\
\text{because of + noun/pronoun}
\end{align*}

\textit{Because} is a conjunction. It joins two clauses together.

\text{I was worried because} Mary was late.
\textit{Because} I was tired, I went home.

\textit{Because of} is a preposition (used before a noun or a pronoun).

\text{I was late} \textit{because of} the rain.
61 before (adverb)

1 We can use before to mean 'at any time before now'. We use it with a present perfect tense (have + past participle).
   *Have you seen this film before?*
   *I've never been here before.*

Before can also mean 'before then', 'before the past time that we are talking about'. We use a past perfect tense (had + past participle).
   *She realized that she had seen him before.*

2 In expressions like three days before, a year before, a long time before, the meaning is 'before then'. We use a past perfect tense. (See 20.4 for an explanation of the difference between before and ago in these expressions.)
   *When I went back to the school that I had left eight years before, everything was different.*

62 before (conjunction)

1 We can use before to join two clauses.
   We can either say: *A happened before B happened*
   OR *Before B happened, A happened.*

The meaning is the same: A happened first.
Note the comma (,) in the second structure.
   *I bought a lot of new clothes before I went to America.*
   *Before I went to America, I bought a lot of new clothes.*
   *He did military service before he went to university.*
   ( = He did military service first.)
   *Before he did military service, he went to university.*
   ( = He went to university first.)

2 In a clause with before, we use a present tense if the meaning is future. (See 343.)
   *I'll telephone you before you leave.*
   (NOT . . . before you will leave.)

3 In a formal style, we often use the structure before + -ing.
   *Please put out all lights before leaving the office.*
   *Before beginning the book, he spent five years on research.*
before (preposition) and in front of

**before**: time

**in front of**: place

Compare:

I must move my car before nine o'clock.

It's parked in front of the post office.

(Not... before the post office.)

We do not use in front of for things which are on opposite sides of a road, river, room etc. Use opposite or facing.

There's a pub opposite my house.

(Not... in front of my house.)

We stood facing each other across the train.

(Not... in front of each other.)

begin and start

1. There is not usually any difference between begin and start.

I started/began teaching when I was twenty-four.

If John doesn't come soon, let's start/begin without him.

We prefer start when we talk about an activity that happens regularly, with 'stops and starts'.

It's starting to rain.

What time do you start teaching tomorrow morning?

We prefer begin when we talk about long, slow activities, and when we are using a more formal style.

Very slowly, I began to realize that there was something wrong.

We will begin the meeting with a message from the President.

2. Start (but not begin) is used to mean:

a. 'start a journey'

I think we ought to start at six, while the roads are empty.

b. 'start working' (for machines)

The car won't start.

c. 'make (machines) start'

How do you start the washing machine?

For the use of the infinitive and the -ing form after begin and start, see 182.11.
big, large, great and tall

1 We use big mostly in an informal style.
   We’ve got a big new house.
   Get your big feet off my flowers.
   That’s a really big improvement.
   You’re making a big mistake.

   In a more formal style, we prefer large or great.
   Large is used with concrete nouns (the names of things you can see,
touch, etc).
   Great is used with abstract nouns (the names of ideas etc).

   It was a large house, situated near the river.
   I’m afraid my daughter has rather large feet.
   Her work showed a great improvement last year.

   With uncountable nouns, only great is possible.
   There was great confusion about the dates.
   (NOT . . . big confusion . . . )
   I felt great excitement as the meeting came nearer.

2 Tall is used to talk about vertical height (from top to bottom). It is mostly
   used for people; sometimes for buildings and trees. (See also 339: tall
   and high.)
   ‘How tall are you?’ ‘One metre ninety-one.’

3 We also use great to mean ‘famous’ or ‘important’.
   Do you think Napoleon was really a great man?
   Newton was probably the greatest scientist who ever lived.

4 We sometimes use great to mean ‘wonderful’ (very informal).
   I’ve had a great idea!
   ‘How’s the new job?’ ‘Great.’
   It’s a great car.

5 Note that large is a ‘false friend’ for people who speak some European
   languages. It does not mean the same as wide.
   The river is a hundred metres wide. (NOT . . . metres large.)
66 born

To be born is passive.

Hundreds of children are born deaf every year.

To talk about somebody’s date or place of birth, use the simple past tense was/were born.

I was born in 1936. (NOT I am born in 1936.)
My parents were both born in Scotland.

67 borrow and lend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>borrow something from somebody</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lend something to somebody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lend somebody something</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Borrow is like take. You borrow something from somebody.

I borrowed a pound from my son. Can I borrow your bicycle?

Lend is like give. You lend something to somebody, or lend somebody something (the meaning is the same).

I lent my coat to a friend of my brother’s, and I never saw it again.

Lend me your comb for a minute, will you?

For lend in passive structures, see 356.4.

68 both (of) with nouns and pronouns

1 We can put both (of) before nouns and pronouns.
Before a noun with a determiner (for example: the, my, these), both and both of are both possible.

Both (of) my parents like riding. She’s eaten both (of) the chops.

We can also use both without a determiner.

She’s eaten both chops. (= ... both of the chops.)

Only both of is possible before a personal pronoun (us, you, them).

Both of them can come tomorrow.
Mary sends her love to both of us.

2 We can put both after object pronouns.

I’ve invited them both. Mary sends us both her love.
I’ve made you both something to eat.

3 Note: we do not put the before both.

both children (NOT the both children)
69 both with verbs

Both can go with a verb, in ‘mid-position’, like some adverbs (see 13.2).

1 auxiliary verb + both
   am/are/is/was/were + both
   We can both swim.
   They have both finished.
   We are both tired.

2 both + other verb
   My parents both like travelling.
   You both look tired.

70 both . . . and . . .

- both + adjective + and + adjective
- both + noun + and + noun
- both + clause + and + clause

We usually put the same kind of words after both and and.

She's both pretty and clever. (adjectives)
I spoke to both the Director and his secretary. (nouns)
(NOT + both + spoke to the Director and his secretary.)
She both plays the piano and sings. (verbs)
(NOT She both plays the piano and she sings.) (verb, clause)

See also either . . . or (107) and neither . . . nor (218).

71 bring and take

1 We use bring for movements to the place where the speaker or hearer is.
   We use take for movements to other places.

Compare:
This is a nice restaurant. Thanks for bringing me here.
(NOT . . . Thanks for taking me here.)
Let's have another drink, and then I'll take you home.
(NOT . . . and then I'll bring you home.)
(on the phone) Can we come and see you next weekend? We'll bring
   a picnic.
   Let's go and see the Robinsons next weekend. We can take a picnic.
We can use *bring* for a movement to a place where the speaker or listener was or will be. Compare:

'Where are those papers I asked for?' ‘I *brought* them to you when you were in Mr Allen's office. Don't you remember?’
I *took* the papers to John's office.

Can you *bring* the car to my house tomorrow?
Can you *take* the car to the garage tomorrow?

The difference between *come* and *go* is similar. (See 83.)
For other uses of *take*, see 337; 338.

## 72 (Great) Britain, the United Kingdom, the British Isles and England

*Britain* (or *Great Britain*) and the *United Kingdom* (or the *UK*) include England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. (Sometimes *Britain* or *Great Britain* is used just for the island which includes England, Scotland and Wales, without Northern Ireland.)
The *British Isles* is the name for England, Scotland, Wales, the whole of Ireland, and all the islands round about.
Note that *England* is only one part of Britain. Scotland and Wales are not in England, and Scottish and Welsh people do not like to be called 'English'.

![Map of Great Britain and the British Isles](image-url)
### 73 British and American English

These two kinds of English are very similar. There are a few differences of grammar and spelling, and rather more differences of vocabulary. Pronunciation is sometimes very different, but most British and American speakers can understand each other.

#### 1 Grammar

**US**

- *He* just went home.
- *Do you have* a problem?
- I've never really *gotten* to know him.
- It's important that he *be* told.
- (on the telephone) *Hello, is this Harold?*

**GB**

- *He's* just gone home. (See 243.)
- *Have you got* a problem? (See 153.2.)
- I've never really *got* to know him.
- It's important that he *should be* told. (See 332.1.)
- Hello, *is that* Harold? (See 341.4.)

**US GB US GB**

- It looks *like* it's going to rain.
  (See 49.3.)
- *He looked at me* really strangely. (informal) (See 275.)

**US GB US GB**

- *second floor*
- french fries
- garbage
- lift
- autumn
- *pant*
- *ground floor*

### 2 Vocabulary

There are very many differences. Sometimes the same word has different meanings (GB *mad* = 'crazy'; US *mad* = 'angry'). Often different words are used for the same idea (GB *lorry*; US *truck*). Here are a few examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>US</th>
<th>GB</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>GB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apartment</td>
<td>flat</td>
<td>second floor</td>
<td>first floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cab</td>
<td>taxi</td>
<td>french fries</td>
<td>chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>tin</td>
<td>garbage</td>
<td>rubbish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candy</td>
<td>sweets</td>
<td>or trash</td>
<td>petrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>check</td>
<td>bill (in a restaurant)</td>
<td>gas(oline)</td>
<td>petrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closet</td>
<td>cupboard</td>
<td>highway</td>
<td>main road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or cabinet</td>
<td></td>
<td>intersection</td>
<td>crossroads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cookie</td>
<td>biscuit</td>
<td>mad</td>
<td>angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corn</td>
<td>maize</td>
<td>mail</td>
<td>post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crazy</td>
<td>mad</td>
<td>motor</td>
<td>engine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elevator</td>
<td>lift</td>
<td>movie</td>
<td>film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fall</td>
<td>autumn</td>
<td>one-way</td>
<td>single (ticket)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first floor</td>
<td>ground floor</td>
<td>pants</td>
<td>trousers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expressions with prepositions and particles:

**US**
- check something **out**
- do something **over**
- fill **in/out** a form
- meet **with** somebody
- visit **with** somebody
- Monday **through** Friday
- home
- Mondays

**GB**
- check something
- do something **again**
- fill **in** a form
- meet somebody
- visit somebody
- Monday **to** Friday
- at home
- on Mondays

### Spelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>US</strong></th>
<th><strong>GB</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aluminum</td>
<td>aluminium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyze</td>
<td>analyse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>catalog</td>
<td>catalogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>center</td>
<td>centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>check</td>
<td>cheque (from a bank)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>color</td>
<td>colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defense</td>
<td>defence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honor</td>
<td>honour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many verbs end in **-ize** in American English, but in **-ise** or **-ize** in British English. For example: US **realize** / GB **realise** or **realize**.

### 74 broad and wide

**Wide** is used for the physical distance from one side of something to the other.

*We live in a very wide street.*  *The car’s too wide for the garage.*

**Broad** is mostly used in abstract expressions. Some examples:

- **broad** agreement (**=** agreement on most points)
- **broad-minded** (**=** tolerant)  **broad** daylight (**=** full, bright daylight)
Broad is also used in the expression broad shoulders ( = wide strong shoulders), and in descriptions of landscape in a formal style.

Across the broad valley, the mountains rose blue and mysterious.

75 but = except

1 We use but to mean ‘except’ after all, none, every, any, no (and everything, everybody, nothing, nobody, anywhere etc).

He eats nothing but hamburgers.
Everybody's here but George.
I've finished all the jobs but one.

We usually use object pronouns (me, him etc) after but.

Nobody but her would do a thing like that.

2 We use the infinitive without to after but.

That child does nothing but watch TV.
(NOT . . . nothing but watching TV)

3 Note the expressions next but one, last but two etc.

My friend Jackie lives next door but one. (= two houses from me.)
Liverpool are last but one in the football league.

▷ For except, see 118; 119.

76 by: time

By can mean ‘not later than’.

I'll be home by five o'clock. (= at or before five)
‘Can I borrow your car?’ ‘Yes, but I must have it back by tonight.’ (= tonight or before)
I'll send you the price list by Thursday.

▷ For the difference between by and until, see 351.

77 can and could: forms

1 Can is a ‘modal auxiliary verb’ (see 202). There is no -s in the third person singular.

She can swim very well. (NOT -She cans . . .)

Questions and negatives are made without do.

Can you swim? (NOT -Do you can-swim?)
I can't swim. (NOT +don't can-swim+)

After can, we use the infinitive without to.

I can speak a little English. (NOT +can to speak . . .)
2 Can has no infinitive or participles. When necessary, we use other words.

I'd like to be able to stay here. (NOT . . . to-can stay . . . )
You'll be able to walk soon. (NOT You'll can . . . )
I've always been able to play games well. (NOT I've always could . . . )
I've always been allowed to do what I liked.
(NOT I've always could . . . )

3 Could is the 'past tense' of can. But we use could to talk about the past, present or future (see 78–80).

I could read when I was four. You could be right.
Could I see you tomorrow evening?

Could also has a conditional use.

I could marry him if I wanted to.
( = It would be possible for me to marry him . . . )

4 Contracted negative forms (see 90) are can't (/kɔnt/) and couldn't (/'kudnt/).

Cannot is written as one word.

For 'weak' and 'strong' pronunciations of can, see 358.

5 Can and could are used in several ways. The main uses are:

a to talk about ability

b to talk about possibility
c to ask, give and talk about permission
d to make offers and requests, and to tell people what to do.

For details, see the following sections.

78 can and could: ability

1 Present

We use can to talk about present or 'general' ability.

Look! I can do it! I can do it! I can read Italian, but I can't speak it.

2 Future

We use will be able to to talk about future ability.

I'll be able to speak good English in a few months.
One day people will be able to go to the moon on holiday.

We use can if we are deciding now about the future.

I haven't got time today, but I can see you tomorrow.
Can you come to a party on Saturday?
3 Past

We use could for 'general ability' — to say that we could do something at any time, whenever we wanted. (Was/were able to is also possible.)

*She could read when she was four. (OR She was able to . . .)*

My father could speak ten languages.

We do not use could to say that we did something on one occasion. We use managed to, succeeded in -ing, or was able to.

*How many eggs were you able to get?*

(NT . . . could you get?)

*I managed to find a really nice dress in the sale yesterday.*

(NT . . . could find . . .)

*After six hours' climbing we succeeded in getting to the top of the mountain. (NT . . . we could get to the top . . .)*

But we can use couldn't to say that we did not succeed in doing something on one occasion.

*I managed to find the street, but I couldn't find her house.*

4 Conditional

We can use could to mean 'would be able to'.

*You could get a better job if you spoke a foreign language.*

5 could have . . .

We use a special structure to say that we had the ability to do something, but did not try to do it.

**could have + past participle**

*I could have married anybody I wanted to.*

*I was so angry I could have killed her!*

*You could have helped me — why didn't you?*

79 can: possibility and probability

1 Possibility

We use can to say that situations and events are possible.

*Scotland can be very warm in September.*

*Who can join the club?* 'Anybody who wants to.'

*There are three possibilities: we can go to the police, we can talk to a lawyer, or we can forget all about it.*

*There's the doorbell. Who can it be?* 'Well, it can't be your mother. She's in Edinburgh.'

We use could to talk about past possibility.

*It could be quite frightening if you were alone in our big old house.*
2 Probability

We do not usually use can when we are talking about the chances that something is true, or that something will happen. For this idea (probability), we prefer could, may or might (see 199).

'Where's Sarah?' 'She may/could be at Joe's place.'

(Not 'She can be . . .')

We may go camping this summer. (Not 'We can go . . .')

3 could have . . .

We use a special structure to say that something was possible, but did not happen.

\[
\text{could have} \, + \, \text{past participle}
\]

That was a bad place to go skiing — you could have broken your leg.

Why did you throw the bottle out of the window? It could have hit somebody.

80 can: permission, offers, requests and orders

1 Permission

We use can to ask for and give permission.

'Can I ask you something?' 'Yes, of course you can.'

Can I have some more tea? You can go now if you want to.

We also use could to ask for permission. This is more polite or formal.

Could I ask you something, if you're not too busy?

May and might are also possible in formal and polite requests for permission. (See 200.)

May I have some more tea?

2 Past permission

We use could to say that we had 'general' permission to do something at any time.

When I was a child, I could watch TV whenever I wanted to.

But we don't use could to talk about permission for one particular past action.

I was allowed to see her yesterday evening. (Not + could-see . . .)

(This is like the difference between could and was able to. See 78.3.)

3 Offers

We use can when we offer to do things for people.

'Can I carry your bag?' 'Oh, thanks very much.'

'I can baby-sit for you this evening if you like.' 'No, it's all right, thanks.'
4 Requests

We can ask people to do things by saying Can you . . . ? or Could you . . . ? (more polite); or Do you think you could . . . ?

'Can you put the children to bed?' ‘Yes, all right.’
'Could you lend me five pounds until tomorrow?' ‘Yes, of course.’
'Do you think you could help me for a few minutes?' ‘Sorry, I’m afraid I’m busy.’

5 Orders

We can use you can/could to tell people to do things.

When you’ve finished the washing up you can clean the kitchen. Then you could iron the clothes, if you like.

81 can with remember, understand, speak, play, see, hear, feel, taste and smell

1 remember, understand, speak, play

These verbs usually mean the same with or without can.

I (can) remember London during the war.
She can speak Greek / She speaks Greek.
I can’t/don’t understand.
Can/Do you play the piano?

2 see, hear, feel, smell, taste

We do not use these verbs in progressive tenses when they refer to perception (receiving information through the eyes, ears etc). To talk about seeing, hearing etc at a particular moment, we often use can see, can hear etc.

I can see Susan coming. (NOT I am seeing . . . )
I can hear somebody coming up the stairs.
What did you put in the stew? I can taste something funny.

82 close and shut

1 Close and shut can often be used with the same meaning.

Open your mouth and close/shut your eyes.
I can’t close/shut the window. Can you help me?

The past participles closed and shut can be used as adjectives.

The post office is closed/shut on Saturday afternoon.

Shut is not usually used before a noun.

a closed door (NOT a shut door)
closed eyes (NOT shut eyes)
2 We prefer *close* for slow movements (like flowers closing at night), and *close* is more common in a formal style. Compare:

As we watched, he **closed** his eyes for the last time.
**Shut** your mouth!

3 We *close* roads, railways etc (channels of communication).
We *close* (= *end*) letters, bank accounts, meetings etc.

83 **come** and **go**

1 We use *come* for movements to the place where the speaker or hearer is.
We use *go* for movements to other places.

‘Maria, would you **come** here, please?’ ‘I’m **coming**.’
(NOT . . . ‘I’m **going**.’)

When did you **come** to live here?
Can I **come** and sit on your lap?
I want to **go** and live in Greece.
Let’s **go** and see Peter and Diane.
In 1577, he **went** to study in Rome.

2 We can use *come* for a movement to a place where the speaker or listener was or will be. Compare:

What time did I **come** to see you in the office yesterday? About ten, was it?
I **went** to your office yesterday, but you weren’t in.
Will you **come** and visit me in hospital?
He’s **going** into hospital next week.

▷ The difference between *bring* and *take* is similar. (See 71.)
84 comparison: comparative and superlative adjectives

1 Short adjectives
(adjectives with one syllable; adjectives with two syllables ending in -y)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADJECTIVE</th>
<th>COMPARATIVE</th>
<th>SUPERLATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>old</td>
<td>older</td>
<td>oldest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tall</td>
<td>taller</td>
<td>tallest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheap</td>
<td>cheaper</td>
<td>cheapest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>late</td>
<td>later</td>
<td>latest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nice</td>
<td>nicer</td>
<td>nicest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fat</td>
<td>fatter</td>
<td>fattest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big</td>
<td>bigger</td>
<td>biggest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thin</td>
<td>thinner</td>
<td>thinnest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>happy</td>
<td>happier</td>
<td>happiest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>easy</td>
<td>easier</td>
<td>easiest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most adjectives: + -er, -est.
Adjectives ending in -e: + -r, -st.
One vowel + one consonant: double consonant.
Change y to i.

Note the pronunciation of:
younger /'jʌŋə(r)/
youngest /'jʌŋgest/
longer /'lɒŋɡə(r)/
longest /'lɒŋɡest/
stronger /'strɒŋɡə(r)/
strongest /'strɒŋɡest/

2 Irregular comparatives and superlatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADJECTIVE</th>
<th>COMPARATIVE</th>
<th>SUPERLATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>better</td>
<td>best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bad</td>
<td>worse</td>
<td>worst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>far</td>
<td>farther/further</td>
<td>farthest/furthest (see 126)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old</td>
<td>older/elder</td>
<td>oldest/eldest (see 299.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The determiners little and much/many have irregular comparatives and superlatives:
little less least
much/many more most

3 Longer adjectives
(adjectives with two syllables not ending in -y; adjectives with three or more syllables)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADJECTIVE</th>
<th>COMPARATIVE</th>
<th>SUPERLATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tiring</td>
<td>more tiring</td>
<td>most tiring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cheerful</td>
<td>more cheerful</td>
<td>most cheerful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handsome</td>
<td>more handsome</td>
<td>most handsome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intelligent</td>
<td>more intelligent</td>
<td>most intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practical</td>
<td>more practical</td>
<td>most practical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some two-syllable adjectives have two comparatives and superlatives: for example, *commoner/more common; politer/most polite*. We usually prefer the forms with *more* and *most*.

For information about how to use comparatives and superlatives, see 85.

How to make Comparative Adjectives:

1. **Has the adjective got one syllable?**
   - Yes
     - **Does the adjective end in -e?**
       - Yes
         - **Has the adjective got two vowels?**
           - Yes
             - **Add -ER to the adjective**
           - No
             - **Does the adjective end in two consonants?**
               - Yes
                 - **Double the last letter**
               - No
                 - **Add -R to the adjective**
         - No
           - **Does the adjective end in -y?**
             - Yes
               - **Change y to i**
             - No
               - **Has the adjective got two syllables?**
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                                                               - No
                                                                 - **Does the adjective end in -y?**
                                                                   - Yes
                                                                     - **Change y to i**
                                                                   - No
                                                         - **Does the adjective end in two consonants?**
                                                           - Yes
                                                             - **Double the last letter**
                                                             - No
                                                             - **Add -R to the adjective**
85 comparison: using comparatives and superlatives

1 The difference between comparatives and superlatives

We use the comparative to compare one person or thing with (an)other person(s) or thing(s).
We use the superlative to compare one person or thing with his/her/its whole group.

Compare:

Mary's taller than her three sisters.
Mary's the tallest of the four girls.

Your accent is worse than mine.
Your accent is the worst in the class.

Paul is older than Charles. Sally is younger than Paul. Albert is older than Sally. Charles is younger than Sally. Paul is younger than Eric. Eric is older than Albert. Who is the oldest? Who is the youngest?

2 We use than after comparatives.

The weather's better than yesterday. (NOT...better as yesterday OR better that yesterday)
You sing better than me. (OR...than I do.)
(For I and me etc after than, see 331.4.)
3 We can use double comparatives to say that something is changing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adjective + -er and adjective + -er</th>
<th>more and more + adjective/adverb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm getting fatter and fatter.</td>
<td>We're going more and more slowly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(NOT ... more slowly and more slowly.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 We can use comparatives with the ... the ... to say that two things change or vary together.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>the + comparative + subject + verb.</th>
<th>the + comparative + subject + verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The older I get, the happier I am.</td>
<td>The more dangerous it is, the more I like it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(NOT Older I get ... )</td>
<td>(NOT The more it is dangerous; ... )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The more I study, the less I learn.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 After superlatives, we do not usually use of to refer to a place.

I'm the happiest man in the world. (NOT ... of the world.)

6 Don't leave out the with superlatives.

It's the best book I've ever read. (NOT It's best book ... )

7 We can use superlatives without nouns (see 11.2).

You're the nicest of all.
Which one do you think is the best?

86 comparison: much, far etc with comparatives

1 We cannot use very with comparatives. Instead, we use much or far.

My boyfriend is much/far older than me.
(R Note ... very older than me.)
Russian is much/far more difficult than Spanish.

2 We can also modify comparatives with very much, a lot, lots, any, no, rather, a little, a bit.

very much nicer
a lot happier
rather more quickly
a little less expensive
a bit easier
Is your mother any better?
She looks no older than her daughter.
87 comparison: comparative and superlative adverbs

Most comparative and superlative adverbs are made with more and most.

Could you talk more quietly? (NOT . . . quietlier?)

A few adverbs have comparatives and superlatives with -er and -est. The most common are: fast, soon, early, late, hard, long, well (better, best), far (farther/further, farthest/furthest, see 126), near; and in informal English slow, loud and quick.

Can't you drive any faster?
Can you come earlier?
She sings better than you do.
Talk louder.

88 conditional

Contractions: I'd, you'd, he'd etc; wouldn't/shouldn't

1 Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>would/should + infinitive without to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would like a drink.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>would/should + be + -ing</th>
<th>(progressive conditional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If I was at home now I would be watching TV.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>would/should + have + past participle</th>
<th>(perfect conditional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If it hadn't been so expensive I would have bought it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>would/should + be + past participle</th>
<th>(passive conditional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I knew that the letter would be opened by his secretary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can use would or should after I and we. They mean the same in conditional structures. After you, he, she, it and they, and nouns, we only use would. Compare:

I would/should buy it if I had enough money.
John would buy it if he had enough money.
2 Use

a In sentences with *if*, and similar words (see 165).

*I wouldn’t go* there if I didn’t have to.

Suppose there was a war, what *would you do?*

b In reported speech (see 283.3), to show that somebody said *shall* or *will*.

*I said that I *should need* help. (*I shall need* help.*)

He told me everything *would be* all right.

c For ‘future in the past’.

*I was late. I *would have* to run to catch the train.*

d With *like, prefer* etc., in polite requests and offers.

*I would like* some tea. *Would you prefer* meat or fish?

3 After some conjunctions we use a past tense instead of a conditional.

(See 343).

*If I was rich I *would do what I liked.* (NOT ... *what I would like.*)

4 Note that the word *conditional* can have another meaning. It is used not only for the structure *would/should + infinitive* (as here), but also for a kind of clause or sentence with *if* (see 164–165).

> For other uses of *should*, see 294. For other uses of *would*, see 369.

9 conjunctions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>clause + conjunction + clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>conjunction + clause, + clause</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 A conjunction joins two clauses.

*I’m tired *and* I want to go to bed."

*I tried hard *but* I couldn’t understand.*

*His father died, so he had to stop his studies.*

*I know that you don’t like her.*

*I’ll sell it to you cheap *because* you’re a friend of mine.*

*She married him although she didn’t love him.*

*We’ll start at eight o’clock *so that* we can finish early.*

*I’d tell you if I knew.*

*And, but, so and that* go between two clauses.

Most other conjunctions can also go at the beginning of a sentence.

*Because* you’re a friend of mine, I’ll sell it to you cheap.

*Although she didn’t love him, she married him.*

*So that we can finish early, we’ll start at eight o’clock.*

*If I knew, I’d tell you.*

*When a conjunction begins a sentence, there is usually a comma (,) between the two clauses.*
We do not usually write the two clauses separately, with a full stop (.) between them.

*It was late when I got home.* (NOT *It was late. When I got home.*)

But we can sometimes separate the two clauses in order to emphasize the second, especially with *and, but, so, because* and *although*.

*James hated Mondays. And this Monday was worse than usual.*

And we separate clauses in conversation (when two different people say them).

*"John’s late." Because he was doing your shopping.*

**One conjunction is enough to join two clauses. Don’t use two.**

*Although she was tired, she went to work.*

She was tired, *but* she went to work.

*(NOT *Although she was tired, *but* she went to work.*)

*Because I liked him, I tried to help him.*

*I liked him, *so* I tried to help him.*

*(NOT *Because I liked him, *so* I tried to help him.*)

*As you know, I work very hard.*

*You know that I work very hard.*

*(NOT *As you know, *that* I work very hard.*)

**Relative pronouns (who, which and *that* — see 277) join clauses like conjunctions.**

*There’s the girl who works with my sister.*

A relative pronoun is the subject or object of the verb that comes after it. So we do not need another subject or object.

*I’ve got a friend who works in a pub.* (NOT ... *who he works ...*)

*The man (that) she married was an old friend of mine.*

*(NOT *The man (that) she married him ...*)

*She always says thank-you for the money (that) I give her.*

*(NOT ... for the money (that) I give it her.*)

**Contractions**

**1 Sometimes we make two words into one: for example**

*I’ve /awl/ ( = *I have*); don’t /daunt/ ( = *do not*).

These forms are called ‘contractions’. There are two kinds:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pronoun + auxiliary verb</th>
<th>auxiliary verb + not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’ve you’ll he’d</td>
<td>aren’t isn’t hadn’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we’re they’ve it’s</td>
<td>don’t won’t (= <em>will not</em>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The forms ‘ve, ‘ll, ‘d, and ‘re are only written after pronouns, but we write ‘s (= *is/has*) after nouns and question-words as well.

*My father’s a gardener. Where’s the toilet?*
The apostrophe (') goes in the same place as the letters that we leave out: has not = hasn't (NOT he's not).
Contractions are common in informal speech and writing; they are not used in a formal style.

2 Sometimes an expression can have two possible contractions. For she had not, we can say she'd not or she hadn't; for he will not, we can say he'll not and he won't.
In Southern British English, the forms with n't are more common in most cases (for example she hadn't; he won't).
We do not use double contractions: she's'n't is impossible.

3 Contractions are unstressed. When an auxiliary verb is stressed (for example, at the end of a clause), a contraction is not possible. Compare:

You're late. Yes, you are. (NOT Yes, you're.)
I've forgotten. Yes, I have. (NOT Yes, I've.)

However, negative contractions are stressed, and we can use them at the ends of clauses.

No, you aren't. No, you haven't.

Contractions: pronunciation and meaning

I'm /aɪm/ I am
I've /aɪv/ I have
I'll /aɪl/ I will/shall
I'd /aɪd/ I had/would/should
you're /jʊr/ you are
you've /ju:v/ you have
you'll /ju:l/ you will
you'd /ju:d/ you had/would
he's /hiːz/ he is/has
he'll /hiːl/ he will
he'd /hiːd/ he had/would
she's /ʃiːz/ she is/has
she'll /ʃiːl/ she will
she'd /ʃiːd/ she had/would
it's /ɪts/ it is/has
it'll /ɪtl/ it will
it'd /ɪtd/ it had/would (not often written)
we're /wɪə(r)/ we are
we've /wɪ:v/ we have
we'll /wɪ:l/ we will/shall
we'd /wɪ:d/ we had/would
they're /ðeə(r)/ they are
they've /ðeɪv/ they have
they'll /ðeɪl/ they will
they'd /ðeɪd/ they had/would
aren't  /əːnt/ are not
can't  /kænt/ cannot
couldn't  /ˈkʊdnt/ could not
daren't  /ˈdeənt/ dare not
didn't  /ˈdidnt/ did not
doesn't  /ˈdəznt/ does not
don't  /dənt/ do not
hasn't  /ˈhæznt/ has not
haven't  /ˈhævnt/ have not
hadn't  /ˈhædnt/ had not
isn't  /ˈɪznt/ is not
mightn't  /ˈmaɪnt/ might not
mustn't  /ˈmʌstnt/ must not
needn't  /ˈniːdnt/ need not
oughtn't  /ˈəʊtnt/ ought not
shan't  /ʃænt/ shall not
shouldn't  /ʃəʊnt/ should not
wasn't  /ˈwɔznt/ was not
weren't  /ˈwɜːnt/ were not
won't  /ˈwʊnt/ will not
wouldn't  /ˈwʊdnt/ would not

Notes
a Am not is contracted to aren't (/əːnt/) in questions.
  I'm late, aren't I?
b In non-standard English, ain't is used as a contraction of am not, are not, is not, have not and has not.
c Do not confuse it's and its. (See 299.8.)
d For the contraction let's, see 191.

91 ‘copula’ verbs

We use some verbs to join an adjective to the subject. These can be called ‘copulas’ or ‘copula verbs’.
Compare:

The car went fast. (Fast is an adverb. It tells you about the movement.)

The car looks fast. (Fast is an adjective. It tells you about the car itself — rather like saying The car is fast. Look is a copula verb.)

Common copula verbs are:

be  look  seem  appear  sound  smell  taste  feel
She is nice. She looks nice. She seems nice. Her perfume smells nice. Her voice sounds nice. Her skin feels nice.
Some copula verbs are used to talk about change. The most common are become, get, grow, go and turn.

It’s becoming colder. It’s getting colder (informal)
It’s growing colder (literary)
The leaves are turning brown (formal)
The leaves are going brown (informal - see 146)

Other copula verbs are used to say that things do not change. The most common are stay, remain and keep.

How does she stay so young?
I hope you will always remain so charming.
Keep calm.

92 countable and uncountable nouns

1 Countable nouns are the names of separate objects, people, ideas etc which we can count.
We can use numbers and a/an with countable nouns; they have plurals.

a cat three cats a newspaper two newspapers

Uncountable nouns are the names of materials, liquids, and other things which we do not see as separate objects. We cannot use a/an or numbers with uncountable nouns; they have no plurals.

water (NOT a water, two waters) wool (NOT a wool, two wools) weather (NOT a weather, two weathers)

2 We cannot usually put a/an with an uncountable noun even when there is an adjective.

My father enjoys very good health. (NOT a very good health.)
We’re having terrible weather. (NOT a terrible weather.)
He speaks good English. (NOT a good English.)

3 Usually it is easy to see if a noun is countable or uncountable. Obviously house is a countable noun, and air is not. But sometimes things are not so clear. For instance, travel and journey have very similar meanings, but travel is uncountable (it means ‘travelling in general’) and journey is countable (it means ‘one movement from one place to another’). Also, different languages see the world in different ways. For example hair is uncountable in English, but plural countable in many languages; grapes are plural countable in English, but uncountable in some languages.

Here are some more nouns which are uncountable in English, but countable in some other languages, together with related singular countable expressions.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uncountable</th>
<th>Countable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>accommodation</td>
<td>a place to live or stay (NOT an accommodation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advice</td>
<td>a piece of advice (NOT an advice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bread</td>
<td>a loaf; a roll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>furniture</td>
<td>a piece of furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grass</td>
<td>a blade of grass; a lawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information</td>
<td>a piece of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>a fact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lightning</td>
<td>a flash of lightning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luggage</td>
<td>a piece of luggage; a case; a trunk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>money</td>
<td>a note; a coin; a sum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>news</td>
<td>a piece of news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progress</td>
<td>a step forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>research</td>
<td>a piece of research; an experiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubbish</td>
<td>a piece of rubbish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spaghetti</td>
<td>a piece of spaghetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thunder</td>
<td>a clap of thunder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toothache</td>
<td>an aching tooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>travel</td>
<td>a journey; a trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work</td>
<td>a job; a piece of work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A headache is countable.

Many nouns have both countable and uncountable uses. Compare:

- *I'd like some white paper.* (uncountable)
  *I'm going out to buy a paper.* (= a newspaper — countable)

- *The window's made of unbreakable glass.* (uncountable)
  *Would you like a glass of water?* (countable)

- *Could I have some coffee?* (uncountable)
  *Could we have two coffees, please?* (= cups of coffee — countable)

- *She's got red hair.* (uncountable)
  *I've got two white hairs.* (countable)

For more information about particular nouns, look in a good dictionary.
93 country

1 Country (countable) = 'nation', 'land'.
   Scotland is a cold country.
   France is the country I know best.
   How many countries are there in Europe?

2 The country (uncountable) = 'open land without many buildings' (the opposite of the town).
   With this meaning, we cannot say a country or countries (see 92 for the use of uncountable nouns).
   My parents live in the country near Edinburgh.
   Would you rather live in the town or the country?

94 dare

1 Dare is used in two ways:
   a as an ordinary verb, followed by the infinitive with to.
      He dares to say what he thinks.
      She didn't dare to tell him.
   b as a modal auxiliary verb (see 202)
      Dare she tell him?
      I daren't say what I think.

2 In modern English, we usually use dare as an ordinary verb. It is most common in negative sentences.
   She doesn't dare to go out at night.
   They didn't dare to open the door.
   We can use the modal auxiliary form daren't to say that somebody is afraid to do something at the moment of speaking.
   I daren't look.

3 I dare say = 'I think probably', 'I suppose'.
   I dare say it'll rain tomorrow.
   I dare say you're ready for a drink.

95 dates

1 Writing
   A common way to write the day's date is like this:
   30 March 1983   27 July 1984
There are other possibilities:

30th March, 1983  March 30(th) 1983  March 30(th), 1983  30.3.83

British and American people write 'all-figure' dates differently: British people put the day first, Americans put the month first.

6.4.77 = 6 April in Britain, June 4 in the USA.

For the position of dates in letters, see 192.

2 Speaking

30 March 1983 = (British) 'March the thirtieth, nineteen eighty-three' OR 'The thirtieth of March, nineteen eighty-three'

(American) 'March thirtieth, nineteen eighty-three'

For the use of prepositions in dates, see 55, 256.2, 3.

96 determiners

1 Determiners are words like the, my, this, some, either, every, enough, several.

Determiners come at the beginning of noun phrases, but they are not adjectives.

the moon, a nice day, my fat old cat, this house, every week, several young students

We cannot usually put two determiners together. We can say the house, my house or this house, but not the my house or the this house or this my house.

2 There are two groups of determiners:

Group A

a/an the
my your his her its our your their one's whose
this these that those

Group B

some any no
each every either neither
much many more most little less least
few fewer fewest enough several
all both half
what whatever which whichever
3 If we want to put a group B determiner before a group A determiner, we have to use of.

\[
\text{group B determiner + of + group A determiner}
\]

- some of the people
- each of my children
- neither of these doors
- most of the time
- which of your records
- enough of those remarks

Before of we use none, not no, and every one, not every.

- none of my friends
- every one of these books

We can leave out of after all, both and half.

- all (of) his ideas
- both (of) my parents

4 We can use group B determiners alone (without nouns). We can also use them with of before pronouns.

'Do you know Orwell’s books?' ‘Yes, I’ve read several.’

'Would you like some water?’ ‘I’ve got some, thanks.’

- neither of them
- most of us
- which of you

The index will tell you where to find more information about particular determiners.

97 discourse markers

Discourse means ‘pieces of language longer than a sentence’. Some words and expressions are used to show how discourse is constructed. They can show the connection between something we have said and something we are going to say; or they can show the connection between what somebody else has said and what we are saying; or they can show what we think about what we are saying; or why we are talking. Here are some common examples of these ‘discourse markers’.

1 by the way

We use by the way to introduce a new subject of conversation.

'Nice day.' ‘Yes, isn’t it? By the way, have you heard from Peter?’

2 talking about . . .

We use this to join one piece of conversation to another.

'I played tennis with Mary yesterday.' 'Oh, yes. Talking about Mary, do you know she’s going to get married?'

3 firstly, secondly, thirdly; first of all; to start with

We use these to show the structure of what we are saying.
Firstly, we need somewhere to live. Secondly, we need to find work. And thirdly, . . .

‘What are you going to do?’ ‘Well, to start with I’m going to buy a newspaper.’

4 all the same, yet, still, on the other hand, however

These show a contrast with something that was said before.

‘She’s not working very well.’ ‘All the same, she’s trying hard.’
He says he’s a socialist, and yet he’s got two houses and a Rolls Royce.
It’s not much of a flat. Still, it’s home.
‘Shall we go by car or train?’ ‘Well, it’s quicker by train. On the other hand, it’s cheaper by car.’
Jane fell down the stairs yesterday. However, she didn’t really hurt herself.

5 anyway, anyhow, at any rate

These can mean ‘what was said before is not important — the main point is: . . .’

I’m not sure what time I’ll arrive: maybe half past seven or a quarter to eight. Anyway, I’ll be there before eight.
What a terrible experience! Anyhow, you’re all right — that’s the main thing.

6 mind you

To introduce an exception to what was said before.

I don’t like the job at all, really, Mind you, the money’s good.

7 I mean

We say this when we are going to make things clearer, or give more details.

It was a terrible evening. I mean, they all sat round and talked politics for hours.

8 kind of, sort of

To show that we are not speaking very exactly.

I sort of think we ought to start going home, perhaps, really.

9 let me see, well

To give the speaker time to think.

‘How much are you selling it for?’ ‘Well, let me see, . . .’
10 **well**

To make agreement or disagreement 'softer', less strong.

‘*Do you like it?*’ **Well,** *yes, it’s all right.*

‘*Can I borrow your car?*’ **Well,** *no, I’m afraid you can’t.*

11 **I suppose**

To make a polite enquiry.

*I suppose* *you’re not free this evening?*

To show unwilling agreement.

‘*Can you help me?*’ **I suppose so.**

12 **I’m afraid**

To say that one is sorry to give bad news.

‘*Do you speak German?*’ **I’m afraid I don’t.**

Most of these expressions have more than one meaning.

For full details, see a good dictionary. For after all, see 17. For actually, see 7.

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98 **do**: auxiliary verb

The auxiliary verb *do* is used in a lot of ways.

1 We use *do* to make questions with ordinary verbs, but not with auxiliary verbs. (See 270.) Compare:

*Do you like football?* (NOT *Like you football?*)

*Can you play football?* (NOT *Do you can play football?*)

2 We use *do* to make negative sentences with ordinary verbs, but not with auxiliary verbs. (See 214.) Compare:

*I don’t like football.* (NOT +like not football)

*I can’t play football.* (NOT +don’t can play football)

3 We use *do* instead of repeating a complete verb or clause. (See 108.3.)

*She doesn’t like dancing, but I do.* (= . . . but I like dancing.)

*Ann thinks there’s something wrong with Bill, and so do I.*

*You play bridge, don’t you?*

4 We use *do* in an affirmative clause for emphasis. (See 110.1.)

*Do sit down.* *She thinks I don’t love her, but I do love her.*

5 We can use the auxiliary verb *do* together with the ordinary verb *do* — so that we have *do* twice in the same verb phrase.

*What do you do in the evenings?*

‘*My name is Robinson.*’ ‘How do you *do*?’
**99 do + -ing**

We often use do with -ing to talk about activities that take some time, or that are repeated.

There is usually a 'determiner' (see 96) before the ing form — for example the, my, some, much.

- I do my shopping at weekends. Have you done the washing up?
- I did a lot of running when I was younger.
- I think I'll stay at home and do some reading tonight.

▷ For go -ing, see 147.

**100 do and make**

These words are very similar, but there are some differences.

1 We use do when we do not say exactly what activity we are talking about — for example with something, nothing, anything, everything, what.

   Do something! I like doing nothing.
   What shall we do? Then he did a very strange thing.

2 We use do when we talk about work, and in the structure do -ing (see 99).

   I'm not going to do any work today. I'm going to do some reading.
   I dislike doing housework. I hate doing the cooking and shopping.
   Would you like to do my job?

3 We often use make to talk about constructing, building, creating, etc.

   I've just made a cake. Let's make a plan.
   My father and I once made a boat.

4 Learn these expressions:

   - do good/harm/business/one's best/a favour
   - make an offer/arrangements/a suggestion/a decision/
     an attempt/an effort/an excuse/an exception/a mistake/a noise/
     a journey/a phone call/money/a profit/love/peace/war/a bed

▷ For other expressions, look in a dictionary to see if do or make is used.

**101 during and for**

*During* says when something happens; *for* says how long it lasts.

Compare:

- My father was in hospital during the summer.
- My father was in hospital for six weeks. (NOT . . . during six weeks.)
- It rained during the night for two or three hours.
- I'll call in and see you for a few minutes during the afternoon.
102 during and in

1 We use both during and in to say that something happens inside a particular period of time.

   We'll be on holiday during/in August.
   I woke up during/in the night.

2 We prefer during when we stress that we are talking about the whole of the period.

   The shop's closed during the whole of August.
   (NOT . . . in the whole of August.)

3 We use during, not in, when we say that something happens between the beginning and end of an activity (not a period of time).

   He had some strange experiences during his military service.
   (NOT . . . in his military service.)
   I'll try to phone you during the meeting. (NOT . . . in the meeting.)

103 each: grammar

1 We use each before a singular noun.

   each + singular noun

   Each new day is different.

2 We use each of before a pronoun or a determiner (for example the, my, these). The pronoun or noun is plural.

   each of us/you/them
   each of + determiner + plural noun

   She bought a different present for each of us.
   I write to each of my children once a week.

   After each of . . . a verb is usually singular, but it can be plural in an informal style.

   Each of them has his own way of doing things.
   (More informal: Each of them have their own way . . .)

3 Each can come after an indirect object (but not usually a direct object).

   indirect object + each

   I bought the girls each an ice-cream.
   She sent them each a present.

4 We can use each without a noun, but each one is more common.

   I've got five brothers, and each (one) is quite different from the others.
5 Each can go with a verb, in 'mid-position', like some adverbs (see 13.2).

- auxiliary verb + each
- be + each

They have each got their own rooms.
We are each going on a separate holiday this year.
You are each right in a different way.

- each + other verb

We each think the same.
They each want to talk all the time.

▷ For each and every, see 104.

104 each and every

1 We use each to talk about two or more people or things.
We use every to talk about three or more. (Instead of 'every two' we say both).

2 We say each when we are thinking of people or things separately, one at a time.
We say every when we are thinking of people or things together, in a group. (Every is closer to all.)

Compare:

We want each child to develop in his or her own way.
We want every child to be happy.

Each person in turn went to see the doctor.
He gave every patient the same medicine.

The difference is not always very great, and often both words are possible.

You look more beautiful each/every time I see you.

▷ For the difference between every and all, see 24.
For the grammar of each, see 103.
For the grammar of every, see 117.
105 each other and one another

1 Each other and one another mean the same.

Mary and I write to each other/one another every day.
They sat without looking at each other/one another.

2 There is a possessive each other's/one another's.

We often borrow each other's clothes.
They stood looking into one another's eyes.

Each other/one another are not used as subjects.

We must each listen carefully to what the other says.
(NOT We must listen carefully to what each other say.)

3 Note the difference between each other/one another and ourselves/yourselves/themselves. Compare:

They were looking at each other.
( = Each person was looking at the other.)

They were looking at themselves.
( = Each person was looking at him- or herself.)

106 either: determiner

1 We use either before a singular noun to mean 'one or the other'.

either + singular noun

Come on Tuesday or Thursday. Either day is OK.

Sometimes either can mean 'both' (especially before side and end). The noun is singular.

There are roses on either side of the door.

2 We use either of before a pronoun or a determiner (for example the, my, these). The pronoun or noun is plural.

either of + determiner + plural noun

I don't like either of them.
I don't like either of my maths teachers.

3 We can use either without a noun.

'Would you like tea or coffee?' 'I don't mind. Either.'

4 Either is pronounced /'eɪðə(r)/ or /'iːðə(r)/ (in American English usually /'iːðər/).

For either . . . or . . . see 107. For not either, neither and nor, see 217.
107 either . . . or . . .

We use either . . . or . . . to talk about a choice between two possibilities (and sometimes more than two).

- You can either have tea or coffee.
- I don't speak either French or German.
- You can either come with me now or walk home.
- Either you leave this house or I'll call the police.
- If you want ice-cream, you can have either lemon, coffee or vanilla.

For pronunciation see 106. For either as a determiner (with a noun) see 106. For not either, neither or nor, see 217.

108 ellipsis (leaving words out)

We often leave words out when the meaning is clear without them.

1 At the beginning of a sentence

In an informal style, we often leave out articles (the, a/an) possessives (my, your etc), personal pronouns (I, you etc) and auxiliary verbs (am, have etc) at the beginning of a sentence.

- Car's running badly. (= The car's . . .)
- Wife's on holiday. (= My wife's . . .)
- Couldn't understand a word ( = I couldn't understand . . .)
- Seen Joe? (= Have you seen Joe?)

2 With and, but and or

If the same word comes in two expressions that are joined by and, but or or, we can usually leave out the word once.

- He sang and (he) played the guitar.
- Would you like some tea or (some) coffee?
- young boys and (young) girls
- in France and (in) Germany
- He opened his eyes once, but (he) didn't wake up.

We can leave out more than one word.

- She washed (her jeans) and ironed her jeans.
- You could have come and (you could have) told me.

3 After auxiliary verbs

We can use an auxiliary verb instead of a complete verb, or even instead of a whole clause, if the meaning is clear. The auxiliary verb usually has a 'strong' pronunciation (see 358).

- 'Get up.' 'I am /æm/.' ( = 'I am getting up.' )
- He said he'd write, but he hasn't ( = . . . hasn't written)
- I can't see you today, but I can tomorrow.
'You're getting better at tennis.' ‘Yes, I am.'
‘I've forgotten the address.' ‘So have I.'
‘You wouldn't have won if I hadn't helped you.' ‘Yes I would.'

In clauses without an auxiliary verb, we can use do instead of repeating a verb or clause.

She likes walking in the mountains, and I do too.

4 After as and than

We can leave out words after as and than, if the meaning is clear.

The weather isn’t as good as last year. ( = . . . as good as it was . . . )
I found more blackberries than you. ( = . . . than you found.)

5 Infinitives

We can use to instead of repeating a whole infinitive.

‘Are you and Gillian getting married?’ ‘We hope to.
I don’t dance much now, but I used to a lot.
To is not necessary after conjunction + want/like.
Come when you want. I’ll do what I like. Stay as long as you like.

109 else

1 Else means ‘other’.

If you can’t help me I’ll ask somebody else. ( = . . . some other person.)

We use else after:
somebody, someone, something, somewhere; anybody, anyone etc;
everybody, everyone etc; nobody, no-one etc;
who, what, where, how, why;
little and (not) much.

Would you like anything else?
‘Harry gave me some perfume for Christmas. ‘Oh, lovely. What else did you get?’

Where else did you go besides Madrid?
We know when Shakespeare was born, and when he died, but we don’t know much else about his life.

2 Else has a possessive else’s.

You’re wearing somebody else’s coat.
There is no plural structure with else. The plural of somebody else is (some) other people.

3 Or else means ‘otherwise’, ‘if not’.

Let’s go, or else we’ll miss the train.
We can emphasize an idea (make it seem more important) in several ways.

1. We can pronounce some words louder and with a higher intonation. In writing, we can show this by using CAPITAL LETTERS or by underlining. In printing, italics or bold type are used.

   *Mary, I'm IN LOVE! Please don't tell anybody.*

   This is the last opportunity.
   He lived in France, not Spain.

Changes in emphasis can change the meaning. Compare:

- Jane phoned me yesterday. (Not somebody else.)
- Jane phoned me yesterday. (She didn't come to see me.)
- Jane phoned me yesterday. (She didn't phone you.)
- Jane phoned me yesterday. (Not today.)

We often emphasize auxiliary verbs. This makes the sentence 'stronger', or it expresses a contrast. When we stress auxiliary verbs, they change their pronunciation (see 358).

- *It was* a nice party!
- *You have* grown!
- *I am* telling the truth — *you must* believe me!

In sentences without auxiliary verbs, we can add *do* for emphasis.

- *Do* sit down.
- *You're wrong — she does* like you.

When auxiliary verbs are stressed, the word order can change (see 14.10). Compare:

- You have certainly grown.
- You certainly *have* grown! (emphatic)

2. We can use special words to show emphasis; for example *so*, *such*, *really*.

   *Thank you so much. It was such a lovely party. I really enjoyed myself."

3. We can also use special structures, including repetition, to make some parts of the sentence more important.

   - *That film — what did you think of it?*
   - *Asleep, then, were you?*
   - *It was John who paid for the drinks.*
   - *What I need is a drink.*
   - *She looks much, much older.*

For details of some of these structures, see 111.
emphatic structures with it and what

We can use structures with it and what to 'point out' or emphasize particular ideas.

1  *It is/was . . . that . . .*

Compare:

My secretary sent the bill to Mr Harding yesterday.

*It was my secretary that sent the bill to Mr Harding yesterday.*
(not somebody else)

*It was the bill that my secretary sent to Mr Harding yesterday.*
(not something else)

*It was Mr Harding that my secretary sent the bill to yesterday.*
(not somebody else)

*It was yesterday that my secretary sent the bill to Mr Harding.*
(not another day)

2  *What (+ subject) + verb + be . . .*

Compare:

My left leg hurts.

What hurts is my left leg.

I like her sense of humour.

What I like is her sense of humour.

3 We can emphasize a verb by using what with do and an infinitive.

Compare:

She screamed.

What she did was (to) scream.

enjoy

*enjoy + noun  
enjoy + pronoun  
enjoy . . . -ing*

Enjoy always has an object. When we talk about having a good time, we can use enjoy myself/yourself etc.

'Did you enjoy the party?' 'Yes, I enjoyed it very much.'

I really enjoyed myself when I went to Rome.

(NOT I really enjoyed when I went . . . )

Enjoy can be followed by . . . -ing.

I don't enjoy looking after children. (NOT . . . enjoy to look . . . )
113 enough

1 Enough comes after adjectives (without nouns) and adverbs.

```plaintext
[adjective/adverb + enough]
Is it warm enough for you? (NOT . . . enough warm . . .)
You're not driving fast enough.
```

2 Enough comes before nouns.

```plaintext
[enough (+ adjective) + noun]
Have you got enough milk? (NOT . . . enough of milk . . .)
There isn't enough blue paint left.
```

We use enough of before pronouns and determiners (for example the, my, this).

```plaintext
[enough of + pronoun]
We didn't buy enough of them.
```

```plaintext
[enough of + determiner (+ adjective) + noun]
The exam was bad. I couldn't answer enough of the questions.
Have we got enough of those new potatoes?
```

3 We can use an infinitive structure after enough.

```plaintext
[. . . enough . . . + infinitive]
She's old enough to do what she wants.
I haven't got enough money to buy a car.
```

```plaintext
[. . . enough . . . + for + object + infinitive]
It's late enough for us to stop work.
```

114 even

1 We can use even to talk about surprising extremes — when people 'go too far', or do more than we expect, for example. Even usually goes in 'mid-position' (see 13.2).

```plaintext
[auxiliary verb + even]
She has lost half her clothes. She has even lost two pairs of shoes.
(NOT . . . Even she has lost . . .)
She is rude to everybody. She is even rude to the police.
(NOT . . . Even she is rude . . .)
```

```plaintext
[even + other verb]
They do everything together. They even brush their teeth together.
He speaks lots of languages. He even speaks Eskimo.
```
Even can go in other positions when we want to emphasize a particular expression.

Anybody can do this. Even a child can do it.
He eats anything — even raw potatoes.
I work every day, even on Sundays.

2 We use not even to say that we are surprised because something has not happened, is not there, etc.

He can't even write his own name.
I haven't written to anybody for months — not even my parents.
She didn't even offer me a cup of tea.

3 Also is not used to talk about surprising extremes.

Everybody got up early. Even George. (NOT Also George:)

4 Even is not used as a conjunction, but we can use even before if and though.

Even if I become a millionaire, I shall always be a socialist.
(NOT Even I become . . . )
Even though I didn’t know anybody at the party. I had a good time.

5 Even so means ‘however’.
He seems nice. Even so, I don’t really like him.

115 eventual(ly)

Eventual and eventually mean ‘final(ly)’, ‘in the end’. We use them when we say that something happened after a long time, or a lot of work.

The chess game lasted for three days. Androv was the eventual winner.
The car didn’t want to start, but eventually I got it going.

Eventually is a ‘false friend’ for students who speak some European languages. We do not use it to talk about possibilities — things that might happen. For this meaning, use possible, perhaps, if, may, might etc.

In our new house, I’d like to have a spare bedroom for possible visitors. (NOT . . . eventual visitors)
I’m not sure what I’ll do next year. I might go to America if I can find a job. (NOT . . . Eventually I’ll go to America . . . )

116 ever

1 Ever means ‘at any time’. Compare:

Do you ever go to Ireland on holiday? ( = ‘at any time’)
We always go to Ireland on holiday. ( = ‘every time’)
We never have holidays in England. ( = ‘at no time’)

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2 Ever is used mostly in questions. We also use ever in affirmative sentences after if, and with words that express a negative idea (like nobody, hardly or stop).

Do you ever go to pop concerts?
I hardly ever see my sister.
Come and see us if you are ever in Manchester.
Nobody ever visits them.
I'm going to stop her ever doing that again.

3 When ever is used with the present perfect tense (see 243.4) it means 'at any time up to now'. Compare:

Have you ever been to Greece?
Did you ever go to Naples when you were in Italy?
( = at a particular time in the past)

4 Note the structure [comparative + than ever].
You're looking lovelier than ever.

5 In forever (or for ever) and ever since, ever means 'always'.
I shall love you forever. I've loved you ever since I met you.

6 Don't confuse ever with yet and already.
Yet and already are used for things which happen around the present —
events which are expected.
Has Aunt Mary come yet?
Good heavens! Have you finished the washing up already?
Ever means 'at any time in the past'.
Have you ever been to Africa?

＞ For whoever, what ever etc, see 364. For whoever, whatever etc, see 365.

117 every and every one

1 We use every before a singular noun.

every + singular noun
I see her every day. (NOT ... every days.)
Every room is being used.

2 We use every one of before a pronoun or determiner (for example the, my, these). The pronoun or noun is plural.

every one of us/you/Them
every one of + determiner + plural noun
His books are wonderful. I've read every one of them.
Every one of the plates is broken.
3 We can use *every one* without a noun.

    *Every one* is broken.
    I've read *every one*.

4 *Every* is used with a plural noun in expressions like *every three days*,
    *every six weeks*.

    *I go to Italy every six weeks.*

5 *Everybody*, *everyone* and *everything* are used with singular verbs, like
    *every*.

    *Everybody has* gone home.
    (NOT *Everybody have* . . . )

    *Everything is* ready.

▷ For *he or she* etc or *they* etc after *every*, *everybody*, see 307.
    For *each and every* (meaning), see 104.

118 except

1 When we put a verb after *except*, we usually use the infinitive without *to*.

    *We can't do anything except wait.*
    *He does nothing except eat all day.*

2 After *except*, we put object pronouns (*me, him* etc), not subject
    pronouns.

    *Everybody understands except me.*
    *We're all ready except her.*

▷ *But* (meaning 'except') is used in the same way. See 75.
    For the difference between *except* and *except for*, see 119.

119 except and except for

1 We can use *except* or *except for* after *all, any, every, no, anything/body/
    one/where, everything/body/one/where, nothing/body/one/where, and
    whole* — that is to say, words which suggest the idea of a *total*.
    In other cases we usually use *except for*, but not *except*.

    Compare:

    *He ate everything on his plate except (for) the beans.*
    *He ate the whole meal except (for) the beans.*
    *He ate the meal except for the beans.*
    (NOT . . . except the beans —)
I've cleaned all the rooms except (for) the bathroom.
I've cleaned the whole house except (for) the bathroom.
I've cleaned the house except for the bathroom.
(NOT . . . except the bathroom . . .)

We're all here except (for) John and Mary.

Except for John and Mary, we're all here.
(NOT - Except John and Mary - . . .)

2 We use except, not except for, before prepositions and conjunctions.

It's the same everywhere except in Scotland.
She's beautiful except when she smiles.

120 exclamations

1 With how (rather formal)

- how + adjective
  Strawberries! How nice!

- how + adjective/adverb + subject + verb
  How cold it is! (NOT - How it is cold!)
  How beautifully you sing! (NOT How you sing beautifully!)

- how + subject + verb
  How you've grown!

2 With what

- what a/an (+ adjective) + singular countable noun
  What a rude man! (NOT - What rude man!)
  What a nice dress! (NOT - What nice dress!)
  What a surprise!

- what (+ adjective) + uncountable/plural noun
  What beautiful weather! (NOT - What a beautiful weather!)
  What lovely flowers!

3 Negative questions

Isn't the weather nice!
Hasn't she grown!

In American English, ordinary (non-negative) question forms are often used in exclamations.

Am I hungry! Did she make a mistake!
121 excuse me, pardon and sorry

1 We usually say excuse me before we interrupt or disturb somebody; we say sorry after we disturb or trouble somebody. Compare:

Excuse me, could I get past? . . . Oh, sorry, did I step on your foot?
Excuse me, could you tell me the way to the station?

I beg your pardon is a more formal way of saying sorry.

I beg your pardon. I'm afraid I didn't realize this was your seat.

2 If we do not hear or understand what people say, we usually say Sorry? What? (informal) or (I beg your) pardon?

Americans also say Pardon me?

'Mike's on the phone.' 'Sorry? I said, 'Mike's on the phone.' '
'See you tomorrow.' 'What?' I said, 'See you tomorrow.' '
'You're going deaf.' 'I beg your pardon?'

122 expect, hope, look forward, wait, want and wish

1 Meaning

expect

Expecting is a kind of thinking: it is not an emotion. If I expect something, I have good reason to think that it will happen.

We expect to leave here in three years.
I'm expecting a phone call from John today.

hope

Hoping is more emotional. If I hope for something, I want it to happen, but I am not sure that it will happen, and I can do nothing about it.

I hope she writes to me soon.
I hope they find that poor woman's child.
I hope we don't have a war.
look forward
Looking forward is an emotion about something that is certain to happen. If I look forward to something, I know it will happen, I feel happy about it, and I would like the time to pass quickly so that it will happen soon.

He’s looking forward to his birthday.
I’m really looking forward to going to Morocco in June.
I look forward to hearing from you. (common formula at the end of a letter)

wait
Waiting happens when something is late, or when you are early for something. I wait for something that will probably happen soon; I am conscious of the time passing (perhaps not quickly enough); I may be angry or impatient.

I hate waiting for buses.
It’s difficult to wait for things when you’re three years old.
‘What’s for supper?’ Wait and see.

want
Wanting is emotional, like hoping. But if I want something to happen, I may be able to do something about it.

What do you want to do when you leave school?
I’m going to start saving money. I want a better car.

wish
Wishing is wanting something that is impossible, or that doesn’t seem probable — being sorry that things are not different.

I wish I could fly.
I wish I had more money.
I wish she would stop singing.

Wish + infinitive can also be used like want (but wish is more formal).
I wish to see the manager.

2 Some comparisons
I’m expecting a phone call from Mary.
I’ve been waiting all day for Mary to phone — what does she think she’s doing?
I expect it will stop raining soon. (= I think it will stop.)
I hope it stops raining soon. (= It may stop or it may not; I would like it to stop.)
I wish it would stop raining. (= It doesn’t look as if it’s going to stop; I feel sorry about that.)
I hope you have a good time in Ireland. (I can’t do anything about it.)
I want you to have a good time while you’re staying with us (I’ll do what I can to make things nice for you.)
I expected her at ten, but she was late.
I waited for her until eleven, and then I went home.
3 Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>expect + object</td>
<td>I'm expecting a phone call.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expect (+ object)</td>
<td>I expect to see her on Sunday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expect + infinitive</td>
<td>I'm expecting him to arrive soon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expect + that-clause</td>
<td>'Is Lucy coming?' 'I expect so.'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hope for + object</td>
<td>I'm hoping for a letter from Eric.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hope + infinitive</td>
<td>I hope to go to America next month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hope + that-clause</td>
<td>I hope that they get here soon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hope so</td>
<td>'Are the shops open tomorrow?' 'I hope so.'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>look forward to + object</td>
<td>I'm looking forward to the holidays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look forward to +...+ing</td>
<td>I look forward to hearing from you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wait</td>
<td>'Can I go now?' 'Wait.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wait and ...</td>
<td>'What's for supper?' 'Wait and see.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wait for + object</td>
<td>I'm waiting for a phone call.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wait + infinitive</td>
<td>I'm waiting to hear from John.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wait for + object</td>
<td>I'm waiting for John to phone.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>want + object</td>
<td>I want a new car.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>want (+ object) + infinitive</td>
<td>I want to go home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>want him to go home</td>
<td>I want him to go home.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wish (+ object) + infinitive</td>
<td>I wish to see the manager. (formal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wish + clause</td>
<td>I wish him to look at this. (formal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wish I had more money</td>
<td>I wish I had more money. (See 367.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
123 explain

After explain, we use to before an indirect object.

I explained my problem to her. (NOT +explained her my problem.)
Can you explain (to me) how to get to your house?
(NOT +Can you explain me . . . ?)

124 fairly, quite, rather and pretty

not fairly quite rather/pretty very

nice nice nice nice nice

1 Fairly modifies adjectives and adverbs. It is not very strong: if you say
that somebody is ‘fairly nice’ or ‘fairly clever’, she will not be very
pleased.

‘How was the film?’ ‘Fairly good. Not the best one I’ve seen this year.’
I speak Greek fairly well — enough for most everyday purposes.

2 Quite is a little stronger than fairly.

‘How was the film?’ ‘Quite good. You ought to go.
He’s been in Greece for two years, so he speaks Greek quite well.’
Quite can modify verbs.
It was a good party. I quite enjoyed myself.

3 Rather is stronger than quite. It can mean ‘more than is usual’, ‘more
than was expected’ or ‘more than is wanted’.

‘How was the film?’ ‘Rather good — I was surprised.’
Maurice speaks Greek rather well. People often think he’s Greek.
I think I’ll put the heating on. It’s rather cold.

Rather can modify verbs.
I rather like gardening.

4 Pretty is similar to rather. It is only used in informal English.

‘How are you feeling?’ ‘Pretty tired. I’m going to bed.’

5 Note:

a The exact meaning of these words may depend on the intonation used.
b Quite is not used very much in this way in American English.
c We put quite and rather before a/an.

It was quite a nice day. I’m reading rather an interesting book.
d For other meanings of quite, see 274. For other meanings of rather, see
370.
125 far and a long way

Far is most common in questions and negative sentences, and after too and so.

*How far* did you walk?
I *don't* live far from here.
You’ve gone *too* far.
‘Any problems?’ ‘*Not so far.*’ ( = Not up to now.)

In affirmative sentences, we usually use *a long way.*

*We walked a long way.* (*We walked far* is possible, but not usual.)
*She lives a long way from here.*

*Much, many and long* (for time) are also more common in questions and negative sentences. (See 205 and 194.)

126 farther and further

1 We use both *farther* and *further* to talk about distance.
There is no difference of meaning.

*Edinburgh is farther/further away than York.*
(Only *farther* is used in this sense in American English.)

2 We can use *further* (but not *farther*) to mean 'extra', 'more advanced', 'additional'.

*For further information, see page 277.*
*College of Further Education.*

127 fast

*Fast* can be an adjective or an adverb.

*I've got a fast car.* (adjective) *It goes fast.* (adverb)

128 feel

*Feel* has several meanings.

1 *‘to touch something’*

*Feel* the car seat. It’s wet.

Progressive tenses are possible.

‘What are you doing?’ ‘I’m *feeling* the shirts to see if they are dry.’

2 *‘to receive physical sensations’*

*I suddenly *felt* something on my leg.*
We do not use progressive tenses, but we often use *can feel* to talk about a present sensation.

*I can feel* something biting me!

3 'to think, have an opinion'

Progressive tenses are not used.

*I feel* that you’re making a mistake. (NOT *I’m feeling* . . .)

4 Copula verb (see 91), used with adjectives

Your hands *feel* cold on my skin. *I feel* fine. *Do you feel* happy?

Progressive forms can be used to talk about one’s ‘inside’ feelings.

*I’m feeling* fine. *How are you feeling?*

29 (a) few and (a) little

1 We use *few* with plural nouns, and *little* with singular (uncountable) nouns. Compare:

Few politicians are really honest. *I have little* interest in politics.

2 There is a difference between *a few* and *few*, and between *a little* and *little*. *Few* and *little* are rather negative: they mean ‘not much/much’. *A few* and *a little* are more positive: their meaning is more like ‘some’. Compare:

His ideas are very difficult, and *few* people understand them.  
(= not many people; hardly any people)
His ideas are very difficult, but *a few* people understand them.  
(= some people — better than nothing)

Cactuses need *little* water. Give the roses a *little* water every day.

3 *Few* and *little* (without a) are rather formal. In conversation, we prefer not many, not much, only a *few* or only a *little*.

*Only a few* people speak a foreign language perfectly. 
Come on! We haven’t got *much* time!

30 fewer and less

*Fewer* is the comparative of *few* (used before plural nouns).
*Less* is the comparative of *little* (used before uncountable nouns, which are singular).

few problems *fewer* problems little money *less* money

I’ve got *fewer* problems than I used to have.  
I earn *less* money than a postman.

In informal English, some people use *less* with plural words.

I’ve got *less problems* than I used to have.
131 for: purpose

1 We use for before a noun to talk about a purpose, or reason for doing something.

We went to the pub for a drink. I went to London for an interview.

We do not use for before a verb to talk about purpose.

I went to the pub to have a drink. (NOT . . . for (to) have a drink.)
I went to London to see about a job.

2 We can use for . . . -ing to talk about the purpose of a thing — the reason why we use it.

We use an altimeter for measuring height.
‘What’s that stuff for?’ ‘Cleaning leather.’

132 for + object + infinitive

1 We use this structure after certain adjectives. Some common examples are: usual, unusual, common, normal, rare, important, essential, necessary, unnecessary, anxious, delighted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adjective</th>
<th>for</th>
<th>object</th>
<th>to-infinitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is it usual for John to be so late?</td>
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<tr>
<td>It’s unusual for the weather to be bad in July.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It’s important for the meeting to start at eight.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It’s unnecessary for all of us to go — one will be enough.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I’m anxious for Peter to go to a good school. ( = I want him to go . . . )</td>
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<tr>
<td>I’d be delighted for you to come and stay with us.</td>
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</table>

We could often use a that-clause instead (for example: It’s important that the meeting should start at eight). A that-clause is usually more formal.

2 We use a for-structure after too (see 348.1) and enough (see 113.3).

It’s too heavy for you to lift.
It’s warm enough for the snow to melt.

3 We can use the same structure after some nouns. Examples: idea, time.

His idea is for us to travel in separate cars.
It’s time for everybody to go to bed.

4 Common verbs that are followed by for + object + infinitive: ask, hope, arrange, pay, wait, take (time).

She asked for the car to be ready by five o’clock.
I was hoping for somebody to come and help me.
Can you arrange for the car to be ready this evening?
He paid for her to see the best doctors.
I’m waiting for it to get dark.
It takes five days for a letter to go from London to New York.
for, since, from, ago and before

1 For, since and from 'point forwards' in time. Ago and before 'point backwards' in time.

Then for three months
Since my birthday

Then from six o'clock
Now from now on

For details of the use of ago and before, see 20.4.

2 We use for to say how long something lasts.

For + period of time
I once studied the guitar for three years.
That house has been empty for six weeks.
We go away for three weeks every summer.
My boss will be in Italy for the next ten days.

When we talk about a period of time up to the present, we use for with the present perfect tense (have + past participle).

I've known her for a long time. (NOT know her . . .)

A present progressive with for often refers to the future.

How long are you staying for? ( = Until when . . .)

We can leave out for with How long . . .?

How long are you staying?
How long have you been waiting?

3 From and since give the starting point of an action or state: they say when something begins or began.

From/since + starting point
I'll be here from three o'clock onwards.
I work from nine to five.
From now on, I'm going to go running every day.
From his earliest childhood he loved music.
I've been waiting since ten o'clock.
I've known her since January.
Since gives the starting point of actions and states that continue up to the present; from gives the starting point of other actions and states.

THEN from nine to five

THEN from his childhood from three o'clock onwards

NOW from now on

THEN since ten o'clock since January

4 For and since can both be used with the present perfect (have + past participle). They are not the same.

for + period since + starting point

I've known her for three days. I've known her since Tuesday.
I've been here for a month. I've been here since July.
I've had my car for ages. I've had my car since 1980.

future: introduction

There are several ways to talk about the future in English.

1 Present tenses

When we talk about future events which are already decided now, or which we can see now 'are on the way', we often use present tenses. There are two possibilities: the present progressive I'm seeing John tomorrow. She's going to have a baby.

and a structure with the present progressive of go I am going to...

I think Liverpool will win.

For more details, see 135.

We can sometimes use the simple present to talk about the future, but only in certain cases. See 138.

2 shall/will

When we are predicting future events which are not already decided or obviously 'on the way', we usually use shall/will + infinitive.

Nobody will ever know what happened to her.
I think Liverpool will win.

For more details, see 136.
3 We can also use \textit{shall} or \textit{will} + infinitive to express 'interpersonal' meanings: when we are offering, making requests, promising or threatening.

\textit{ Shall} I open the window? \textbf{ I WILL} stop smoking!
\textit{ Will} you give me a hand for a moment? \textbf{You'LL be sorry!}

For more details, see 137.

4 \textbf{Other ways of talking about the future}

future perfect (see 139)
\textit{By next Christmas we'LL have been here} for eight years.

future progressive (see 140)
\textit{This time tomorrow I'll be lying} on the beach.

\textit{about to} (see 2)
\textit{I think the plane's about to} take off.

\textit{be to} (see 58)
\textit{The President is to} visit Beijing.

135 \textbf{future: present progressive and going to}

We use these two present tenses to talk about future actions and events which are already decided now: they are planned, or they are starting to happen: we can see them coming.

1 \textbf{Present progressive}

We often say that something \textit{is happening} in the future. We talk like this about actions that are already planned; we often give the time or date.

\textit{What are you doing} this evening?
\textit{We're going} to Mexico next summer.
\textit{I'm having} dinner with Larry on Saturday.
2 **going to**

We can also say that something is *going to happen* in the future.

a We can use *going to* in the same way as the present progressive: to talk about plans and arrangements.

*I'm going to get* a new car soon.
*John's going to call* in this evening.
*When are you going to get* your hair cut?

b We can also use *going to* to say that a future action or event is 'on the way' — we can see it coming; it is starting to happen.

*She's going to have a baby.*  *It's going to rain.*
*He's going to fall!*

For a comparison between the present forms and *shall/will*, see 136.3.
136 future: shall/will (predictions)

1 Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I shall/will</th>
<th>you will</th>
<th>he/she/it will</th>
<th>we shall/will</th>
<th>they will</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

+ infinitive without to

questions: shall/will I; will you; will he/she/it, etc
negatives: I will/shall not; you will not, etc
contractions: I'll, you'll, he'll etc; shan't, won't.

In modern English, I shall and I will, we shall and we will are used with the same meaning to talk about the future. We prefer I will in promises and threats, and shall I in offers: see 137.

2 Meaning

We say that things will happen when they are not already planned or obviously on the way.

Who do you think will win on Saturday?
Tomorrow will be warm, with some cloud in the afternoon.
One day I shall/will/I'll be rich.

3 Present tenses and shall/will: a comparison

When I say that something is happening, or is going to happen in the future, I probably have outside evidence for what I say — for example I can show you a page in a diary, black clouds in the sky, a person who is going to fall.

When I say that something will happen, I do not have outside evidence to show you. I am telling you what I know, or believe, or have calculated, and I am asking you to believe what I say. Compare:

He's not very good.  He's going to fall.

I reckon it'll cost about £7,000 to repair the roof.  The builder's just sent his estimate.  It's going to cost £9,000 to repair the roof.
future: shall and will (interpersonal uses)

We can use shall and will to express our intentions and attitudes towards other people.

1 Decisions

We use will at the moment of making a decision.

I'm going out for a drink. 'Wait a moment and I'll come with you.' (NOT . . . I come with you.)

We use shall to ask what decision we should make.

What shall I do? Shall we tell her?

2 Threats and promises

I'll hit you if you do that again.

I promise I won't smoke again. (NOT I promise I don't . . .)

I'll give you a teddy bear for your birthday.

I'll phone you tonight. (NOT I phone you . . .)

3 Offers and requests

We use Shall I . . .? when we offer to do things.

Shall I carry your bag?

We can use Will you . . .? to ask people to do things.

Will you get me a newspaper when you're out?

future: simple present

1 We can sometimes use the simple present to talk about the future. This is common when we are talking about events which are on a timetable, or something similar.

What time does the train arrive at Paddington?

When is the next bus for Warwick?

Are you on duty next weekend?

The summer term starts on April 10th.

2 The simple present is often used with a future meaning after conjunctions. For details, see 343.

I'll phone you when I arrive.

3 In other cases, we usually use a different tense to talk about the future.

I'm seeing John tomorrow. (NOT I see John tomorrow.)

I'll phone you this evening. (NOT I phone you this evening.)

For more information about the simple present, see 261.
139 future perfect

*shall/will have + past participle*

We use the future perfect to say that something will have been completed by a certain time in the future.

*I'll have been here* for seven years next Friday.

The painters say *they'll have finished* the downstairs rooms by Tuesday.

A progressive form is possible.

*I'll have been teaching* for twenty years this summer.

140 future progressive

*shall/will + be + . . . -ing*

We can use the future progressive to say that something will be going on at a particular moment in the future.

141 gender (masculine and feminine language)

English does not have many problems of grammatical gender: people are *he* or *she* and things are *it*.

Note the following points:

1 Animals, cars and countries

People sometimes call animals *he* or *she*, especially pet animals like cats, dogs and horses.

*Go and find the cat and put him out.*

Some people use *she* for cars, motorbikes etc; sailors often use *she* for boats and ships.

*‘How’s your new car?’ ‘Terrific. *She*’s running beautifully.*

We can use *she* for countries, but *it* is more common.

*He loves Spain — its culture, its history and its civilization.*

**(OR . . . her culture, her history . . .)**
2 **he or she**

We can use *he or she, him or her, his or her* to refer to people like a student or a politician (who can be men or women).

*If a student is ill, he or she must send his or her medical certificate to the College Office.*

This is heavy, and most people use *he/him/his* instead of *he or she* etc.

*A politician has to do what his party tells him.*

After *anybody, somebody, nobody* and some other expressions (see 307), we often use *they/them/their* (with a singular meaning) instead of *he or she* etc.

*If anybody phones, tell them I'm out.*

3 **actor and actress etc**

Some jobs and positions have different words for men and women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Woman</th>
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<th>Woman</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>actor</td>
<td>actress</td>
<td>host</td>
<td>hostess</td>
<td>steward</td>
<td>stewardess</td>
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<td>duchess</td>
<td>monk</td>
<td>nun</td>
<td>waiter</td>
<td>waitress</td>
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<tr>
<td>bridgroom</td>
<td>bride</td>
<td>prince</td>
<td>princess</td>
<td>widower</td>
<td>widow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some words ending in *-man* have a feminine form (for example policeman/policewoman). Others do not: for example, the *chairman* of a committee can be a man or a woman. Many people prefer to use words ending in *-person* for these cases (for example chairperson, spokesperson).

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142 **get + noun, adjective, adverb particle or preposition**

*Get* is a very common word in spoken English. It is usually informal, and structures with *get* are not so common in writing. *Get* has different meanings — it depends what kind of word comes after it.

1 **get + noun/pronoun**

Before a noun or pronoun, *get* usually means 'receive', 'fetch', 'obtain' or something similar.

*I got a letter from Lucy this morning.*

*Can you come and get me from the station when I arrive?*

*I'm going out to get some bread.*

For the structure *I have got*, see 153.

2 **get + adjective**

Before an adjective, *get* usually means 'become'.

*As you get old your memory gets worse.*

*My feet are getting cold.*
We can use \( \text{get} + \text{object} + \text{adjective} \) ( = 'make something become . . . ').

I can't \text{get} my hands warm.
We must \text{get the house clean} before Mother arrives.
For \text{go} + \text{adjective} (\text{go green}, \text{go blind} etc), see 146.

3 \text{get} + \text{adverb particle or preposition}

Before an adverb particle (like up, away, out) or a preposition, \text{get} nearly always refers to a movement.

I often \text{get up} at five o'clock.
I went to see him, but he told me to \text{get out}.
Would you mind \text{getting off} my foot?

We can use the structure with an object, to talk about making somebody/something move.

You can't \text{get her out of} the bathroom in the morning.
Would you mind \text{getting your papers off} my desk?
Have you ever tried to \text{get toothpaste back into} the tube?

For structures with \( \text{get} + \text{object} + \text{verb} \), see 143.

143 \text{get} (+ object) + verb-form

1 After \text{get}, we can use an object with an infinitive or -ing form.

\( \text{get} + \text{object} + \text{infinitive} \)

\( \text{I can't get the car to start.} \)

\( \text{get} + \text{object} + \text{-ing form} \)

\( \text{Don't get him talking about his illnesses, please.} \)

We often use the structure with the infinitive to talk about persuading somebody to do something.

\text{Get John to help us, if you can.} \quad \text{I can't get that child to go} \text{ to bed.}

2 We can use \( \text{get} + \text{object} + \text{past participle} \) with a passive meaning, to talk about arranging for jobs to be done.

\( \text{I must get my hair cut.} \)
\text{You ought to get your watch repaired.}

3 We can use \text{get} instead of \text{be} to make passive structures. We often do this when we are talking about things that happen by accident or unexpectedly.

\( \text{My watch got broken while I was playing with the children.} \)
\text{He got caught by the police driving at 160km an hour.}

For similar structures with \text{have}, see 155.
get and go: movement

Get is used for the end of a movement — the arrival.
Go is used for the whole movement. Compare:

- I go to work by car and Lucy goes by train. I usually get there first.
- I went to Bristol yesterday. I got to Bristol at about eight o’clock.

We often use get when there is some difficulty in arriving.

- It wasn’t easy to get through the crowd.
- I don’t know how we’re going to get over the river.
- Can you tell me how to get to the police station?

145 go: been and gone

1 If somebody has gone to a place, he or she is there now, or on the way.

‘Is Lucy here?’ ‘No, she’s gone to London.’

If somebody has been to a place, he or she has travelled there and come back.

- I’ve been to London six times this week.
- Have you ever been to Northern Ireland?

Been is also used to mean ‘come (and gone away again)’.
- She’s been to see us twice since Christmas.

2 We can use be with gone to say that something has disappeared, or that there is no more.

- Is the butter all gone? When I came back my car was gone.

146 go meaning ‘become’

We use go to mean ‘become’ before some adjectives.

1 This happens with colour words.

- Leaves go brown in autumn.
- People go red, pale or white with anger; blue with cold; green with seasickness.
- If you faint, everything goes black.

In a formal style, we use turn instead of go in these cases.

2 We use go with some other adjectives to talk about things changing for the worse. Some common expressions:

- People go mad, crazy, deaf, blind, grey, bald.
- Machines go wrong, iron goes rusty, meat goes bad, milk goes sour, bread goes stale.
147  go . . . -ing

We often use the structure go . . . -ing, especially to talk about sports and free-time activities.

Let's go climbing next weekend.
Did you go dancing last Saturday?

Common expressions:
go climbing  go dancing  go fishing
go hunting  go riding  go sailing
go shooting  go shopping  go skiing
go swimming  go walking

148  had better

1 We use had better to give advice, or to tell people what to do. The meaning is present or future, not past, but we always use had, not have. After had better, we use the infinitive without to.

It's late — you'd better hurry up.
(NOT . . . you have better . . .)
(NOT . . . you had better hurry ing/to hurry up)

We make the negative with better not + infinitive.
You'd better not wake me up when you come in.
(NOT — You hadn't better wake me . . .)

We can 'tell ourselves what to do' by using I'd better.
It's seven o'clock. I'd better put the meat in the oven.

2 We do not use had better in polite requests.

Could you help me, if you've got time?
(NOT — You'd better help me. This would sound like an order.)

149  half (of)

1 We can use half or half of before a noun.

Half (of) my friends live abroad.
She spends half (of) her time travelling.

Of is not used in expressions of measurement and quantity.

I live half a mile from here. (NOT . . . half of a mile . . .)
How much is half a bottle of whisky?
(NOT . . . half of a bottle . . .)

We use half of before pronouns.

'Did you like the books?' 'I've only read half of them.'
Half of us are free on Tuesdays, and the other half on Thursdays.
2 We only use the with half if we are saying which half we mean. Compare:
   I've bought some chocolate. You can have half.
   (NOT . . . the half.)
   You can have the big half.

3 One and a half is plural.
   I've been waiting for one and a half hours. (NOT . . . hour.)

150 hard and hardly

1 Hard can be an adjective or an adverb.
   It's a hard job. (adjective)
   This is very hard bread. (adjective)
   You have to work hard. (adverb)
   (NOT You have to work hardly.)
   Hit it hard. (adverb)

2 Hardly is an adverb. It means 'almost no' or 'almost not'.
   He hardly works at all. (= He does very little work.)
   I've got hardly any money.
   He knows hardly anything about geography.
   Note that hardly, hardly any, hardly ever etc are much more common
   than almost not, almost no, almost never etc.

   He works hard.

   He hardly works at all.

151 have: introduction

We can use have in several different ways.

a auxiliary verb
   Have you heard about Peter and Corinne?
b to talk about possession, relationships, and other states:

I've got a new car.
Have you got any brothers or sisters?
Do you often have headaches?

c to talk about actions:

I'm going to have a bath.
We're having a party next weekend.

d to talk about obligation (like must):

I had to work last Saturday.

e to talk about causing things to happen:

He soon had everybody laughing.
I must have my shoes repaired.

The grammar is not the same for all of these different meanings of have.
For details, see the next five sections.

For contractions (I've, haven't etc), see 90.
For ‘weak forms’ (/əv/ etc), see 358.
For had better + infinitive, see 148.

152 have: auxiliary verb

- have + past participle

1 We use have as an auxiliary verb to make ‘perfect’ verb forms.

Have you heard about Peter and Corinne?
(present perfect: see 243; 244)
I realized that I had met him before.
(past perfect: see 245)
We'll have been living here for two years next Sunday.
(future perfect: see 139)
I would have told you, but I didn’t see you.
(perfect conditional: see 88)
I'd like to have lived in the eighteenth century.
(perfect infinitive: see 175)
You should have written to me.
(modal auxiliary with perfect infinitive: see 202.3)
Having been there before, he knew what to expect.
(perfect participle)

2 Like all auxiliary verbs, have makes questions and negatives without do.

Have you heard the news? (NOT Do you have heard . . . ?)
I haven’t seen them. (NOT + don’t have seen them.)
have (got): possession, relationships etc

1 We can use have to talk about possession, relationships, illnesses, and the characteristics of people and things (for example in descriptions). We can use do in questions and negatives.

They hardly have enough money to live on.
Do you have any brothers or sisters?
The Prime Minister had a bad cold.
My grandmother didn’t have a very nice character.

2 In British English, we often use the structure I have got to talk about possession, relationships etc. I have got means exactly the same as I have — it is a present tense, not a present perfect. Questions and negatives are made without do.

They’ve hardly got enough money to live on.
Have you got any brothers or sisters? I haven’t got much hair.

Got-forms are used mostly in the present: I had got is unusual. They are informal: we use them very often in conversation, but less often in, for example, serious writing.
We do not use got-forms to talk about repetition or habit. Compare:

I’ve got toothache.
I often have toothache. (NOT I’ve often got toothache.)
We haven’t got any beer today, I’m afraid.
We don’t often have beer in the house.

3 Note that we do not use progressive forms of have for these meanings.

I have a headache. OR I’ve got a headache.
(NOT I’m having a headache.)

have: actions

We often use have + object to talk about actions. (For example: have a drink; have a rest.) In these expressions, have can mean ‘eat’, ‘drink’, ‘take’, ‘do’, ‘enjoy’, ‘experience’ or other things — it depends on the noun.
Common expressions:

have breakfast/lunch/tea/dinner/a meal/a drink/coffee/a beer/a glass of wine
have a bath/a wash/a shave/a shower/a rest/a lie-down/a sleep/a dream
have a holiday/a day off/a good time/a nice evening/a nice day
have a talk/a chat/a conversation/a disagreement/a row/a quarrel/a fight/a word with somebody
have a swim/a walk/a ride/a game of tennis, football etc
have a try/a go
**have a baby ( = ‘give birth’)***

**have difficulty in ... -ing**  **have trouble ... -ing**

**have a nervous breakdown**

In these structures, we make questions and negatives with *do*. *Got* is not used. Progressive forms are possible. Contractions of *have* are not used. 

**Did you have** a good holiday?

'What are you doing?'  *I'm having a bath.*

*I have* lunch at 12.30 most days.  *(NOT *I've lunch* . . . )*

### 155  have + object + verb form

1. We often use the structure  **[have + object + verb form]**

   *It's nice to have people smile at you in the street.*

   *We'll soon have your car going.*

   We use  **[I won't have + object + verb form]** to say that we refuse to allow or accept something.

   *I won't have you telling me what to do.*

   *I won't have people talk to me like that.*

2. We use  **[have + object + past participle]** with a passive meaning, to talk about jobs which are done for us by other people.

   *I must have my shoes repaired.*

   *Lucy had her eyes tested yesterday, and she needs glasses.*

▷ For similar structures with *got*, see 143.

### 156  have (got) to

We use  **[have (got) + infinitive]** to talk about obligation.

The meaning is similar to *must*.

*Sorry, I've got to go now.*

**Do you often have to travel** on business?

The forms with *got* are common in an informal style in present-tense verb forms. *(See 153.2.)* Compare:

*I've got to* go to London tomorrow.

*I had to* go to London yesterday. *(NOT *had got to* . . . )

We do not use *got*-forms to talk about habits or repeated obligations. Compare:

*I've got to* write a financial report tomorrow.

*I have to* write financial reports at the end of every month.

▷ For the difference between *have (got) to* and *must*, and between *haven't got to*, *don't have to*, *mustn't* and *needn't*, see 209.
157 hear and listen (to)

1 Hear is the ordinary word to say that something 'comes to our ears'.
   Suddenly I heard a strange noise.
   Can you hear me?
   Did you hear the Queen's speech yesterday?

Hear is not used in progressive tenses (see 225). When we want to say that we hear something at the moment of speaking, we often use can hear. (See 81.)

I can hear somebody coming. (NOT I am hearing . . . )

2 We use listen (to) to talk about concentrating, paying attention, trying to hear as well as possible. Compare:

I heard them talking in the next room, but I didn't really listen to what they were saying.

'Listen carefully, please.' 'Could you speak a bit louder? I can't hear you very well.'

We use listen when there is no object, and listen to before an object. Compare:

Listen! (NOT Listen to!)

Listen to me! (NOT Listen me!)

The difference between hear and listen (to) is similar to the difference between see and look (at). See 196.

For hear + infinitive or -ing form see 182.6.

158 help

We can use object + infinitive after help.

Can you help me to find my ring?

In an informal style, we often use the infinitive without to.

Can you help me find my ring?

Help me get him to bed.

We can also use help + infinitive without an object.

Would you like to help peel the potatoes?

159 here and there

We use here for the place where the speaker is, and there for other places.

(on the telephone) 'Hello, is Tom there?' 'No, I'm sorry, he's not here.'

(NOT . . . he's not there.)
Don't stay there in the corner by yourself. Come over here and talk to us.

160 holiday and holidays

We use the singular holiday for a short period of, say, one or two days.

We've got a holiday next Tuesday.
We get five days' Christmas holiday this year.

We often use holidays for the 'big holiday' of the year.

Where are you going for your summer holiday(s)?

We always use the singular in the expression on holiday. (Note the preposition.)

I met her on holiday in Norway. (NOT ... in holidays ...)

Americans use the word vacation for a long holiday.

161 home

We do not use to before home.

I think I'll go home. She came home late.
(NOT ... to home.)

In American English, home is often used to mean at home.
Is anybody home?

162 hope

1 After I hope, we often use a present tense with a future meaning.

I hope she likes (= will like) the flowers.
I hope the bus comes soon.
2 In negative sentences, we usually put not with the verb that comes after hope.

I hope she doesn't wake up.
(NOT *don't hope she wakes up.*)

3 We can use *I was hoping* to introduce a polite request.

I was hoping you could lend me some money . . .

I had hoped is used to talk about hopes that were not realized — hopes for things that did not happen.

I had hoped that Jennifer would become a doctor, but she wasn't good enough at science.

▷ For *I hope so/not*, see 311.
For the difference between *hope, want, expect, wish, look forward to* and *wait*, see 122.

163 how and what . . . like?

1 We use *how* to ask about things that change — for example, people's moods and health.
We use *what . . . like* to ask about things that do not change — for example, people's appearance and character. Compare:

*How's* Ron? 'He's very well.'
*What's* Ron *like*? 'He's tall and dark, and a bit shy.'
*How does he look?* 'Surprised.'
*What does he look *like*?* 'Nice.'

2 We often use *how* to ask about people's reactions to their experiences.

*How was the film?* 'Great.'
*How's* your steak?
*How's* the new job?

3 Don't confuse the preposition *like* (in *What . . . like?*) with the verb *like*.
Compare:

*What* is she *like?* 'Lovely.'
*What does she like?* 'Dancing and fast cars.'

164 if: ordinary tenses

if + clause, + clause
clause + if + clause

1 An *if*-clause can come at the beginning or end of the sentence.

*If you eat too much*, you get fat.  You get fat *if you eat too much.*
We can use the same tenses with if as with other conjunctions.

If you want to learn a musical instrument, you have to practise.
If that was Mary, why didn’t she stop and say hello?
If you don’t like hot weather, you’ll be unhappy in Texas.

In the if-clause, we usually use a present tense to talk about the future.
(This happens after most conjunctions — see 343.)

If I have enough time tomorrow, I’ll come and see you.
If that was Mary, why didn’t she stop and say hello?
If you don’t like hot weather, you’ll be unhappy in Texas.

We can use if + will in polite requests, but the meaning is not really future.

If you will come this way, I’ll take you to the manager’s office.
(= If you are willing to come this way, . . .)

For if + will in reported speech (for example I don’t know if I’ll be here tomorrow), see 343.2.
For if not and unless, see 350
For the use of special tenses with if, see 165.

165 if: special tenses

We use ‘special’ tenses with if when we are talking about ‘unreal’ situations — things that will probably not happen, present or future situations that we are imagining, or things that did not happen. (For example, we can use past tenses to talk about the future.)

1 Present and future situations

To talk about ‘unreal’ or improbable situations now or in the future, we use a past tense in the if-clause, and a conditional (see 88) in the other part of the sentence.

If I knew her name, I would tell you.
(Not if I would know . . . Not . . . I will tell you.)

If you came tomorrow, I would have more time to talk.
I would be perfectly happy if I had a car.
What would you do if you lost your job?

We often use were instead of was after if, especially in a formal style.

If I were rich, I would spend all my time travelling.
2 Special tenses and ordinary tenses compared

The difference between if I get and if I got, or if I have and if I had, is not a difference of time. They can both refer to the present or future. After if, the past tense suggests that the situation is less probable, or impossible, or imaginary. Compare:

If I **become** President, I'll . . . (said by a candidate in an election)
If I **became** President, I'd . . . (said by a schoolboy)
If I **win** this race, I'll . . . (said by the fastest runner)
If I **won** this race, I'd . . . (said by the slowest runner)

3 Past situations

To talk about past situations that did not happen, we use a past perfect tense (with had) in the if-clause, and a perfect conditional (see 88) in the other part of the sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>if + past perfect, perfect conditional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>perfect conditional if + past perfect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- If you **had worked** harder, you **would have passed** your exam.
- If you **had asked** me, I **would have told** you.
- I'd have been in bad trouble if Jane **hadn't helped** me.

166 if-sentences with could and might

In if-sentences, we can use could to mean 'would be able to' and might to mean 'would perhaps' or 'would possibly'.

- **If I had another £500, I could buy a car.**
  (= . . . I would be able to buy a car.)
- **If you asked me nicely, I might buy you a drink.**

167 if only

We can use *if only . . . ! to say that we would like things to be different. It means the same as *I wish* (see 367), but is more emphatic. We use the same tenses after *if only* as after *I wish*:

a. past to talk about the present

- **If only I knew** more people!
- **If only I was** better-looking!

In a formal style, we can use *were* instead of *was.

- **If only I were** better-looking!

b. *would* to refer to the future

- **If only it would stop raining!**
- **If only somebody would** smile!
c. past perfect (\(\text{had} + \text{past participle}\)) to refer to the past

If only she hadn't told the police, everything would have been all right.

168 if so and if not

We can use these expressions instead of repeating a verb that has already been mentioned.

Are you free this evening? **If so**, let's go out for a meal.

(= . . . If you are . . .)

I might see you tomorrow. **If not**, then it'll be Saturday.

(= . . . If I don't . . .)

169 ill and sick

1 **ill** means 'unwell'.

I'm sorry I didn't answer your letter. I've been **ill**.

We do not use **ill** before a noun. Instead, we can use **sick**.

She spent years looking after her **sick** mother.

2 We can use **be sick** (in British English) to mean 'bring food up from the stomach'. If you **feel sick**, you want to do this.

*I was sick* three times in the night.

*I feel sick*. Where's the bathroom?

*She's never *sea-sick*.*

In American English, **be sick** means 'be ill'.

170 imperative

1 When we say **Have a drink**, **Come here** or **Sleep well**, we are using **imperative** verb forms: **have**, **come** and **sleep**.

Imperatives have exactly the same form as the infinitive without to. We use them, for example, for telling people what to do, making suggestions, giving advice, giving instructions, encouraging people, and offering things.

**Look** in the mirror before you drive off.

**Tell** him you're not free this evening.

**Try** again — you nearly did it!

**Have** some more tea.

Negative imperatives are made with **don't** or **do not**.

**Don't worry** — everything **will** be all right.

**Do not lean** out of the window.
We can make an emphatic imperative with do. This is common in polite requests, complaints and apologies.

*Do sit down.*  *Do try* to make less noise.
*Do forgive* me — I didn’t mean to interrupt.

2 The imperative does not usually have a subject, but we can use a noun or pronoun to make it clear who we are speaking to.

*Mary come* here — everybody else stay where you are.
*Somebody answer* the phone!

3 After imperatives, we can use the question tags (see 273) *will you?* *won’t you?* *would you? can you? can’t you?* and *could you?*

*Come and help me, will you?*
*Give me a cigarette, could you?*
*Be quiet, can’t you?*

▷ For the ‘first-person plural imperative’ *let’s*, see 191.

171 **in** and **into** (prepositions)

1 To talk about the position of something (with no movement), we use *in*.

*Where’s Susie?* *In* the bedroom.
*My mother’s the woman in the chair by the window.*

2 When we talk about a movement, we usually use *into*.

*She came into* my room holding a paper.
*I walked out into* the garden to think.

After some words, both are possible. (For example *throw, jump, cut, push.*) We prefer *into* when we think of the movement, and *in* when we think of the end of the movement — the place where something will be.

Compare:

*She threw her ring into* the air.
*She threw her ring in(to) the river.*

We use *in* after *sit down*, and very often after *put*.

*He sat down in* his favourite armchair. (NOT *He sat down into* . . .)
*I put* my hand *in* my pocket.

172 **in case**

1 We use *in case* to talk about things we do because something else might happen.

*Take an umbrella in case* it rains. (= . . . because it might rain.)
*I’ve bought a chicken in case* your mother stays to lunch.
*I wrote down her address in case* I forgot it.
After *in case*, we use a present tense with a future meaning.

\[\text{... in case it rains. (NOT ... in case it will rain.)}\]

We can also use *should* + infinitive. In this structure, *should* means 'might'.

> I've bought a chicken *in case* your mother *should stay* to lunch.
> I wrote down her address *in case I should forget* it.

The structure with *should* is more common in the past.

2

Don't confuse *in case* and *if*.

'I do A in case B happens' =
'I do A first because B might happen later.' A is first.

'I do A if B happens' =
'I do A if B has happened first.' B is first.

Compare:

> Let's get a bottle of wine *in case* Roger comes.
> (= We'll buy some wine now because Roger might come later.)

> Let's buy a bottle of wine *if* Roger comes.
> (= We'll wait and see. If Roger comes, then we'll buy the wine. If he doesn't we won't.)

173 *in spite of*

*In spite of* is a preposition.

\[\text{In spite of + noun} = \text{although + clause}\]

> We went out *in spite of* the rain.
> (= We went out *although* it was raining.)

> We understood him *in spite of* his accent.
> (= We understood him *although* he had a strong accent.)

*In spite of* is the opposite of *because of*. Compare:

> He passed the exam *because of* his good teachers.
> He passed the exam *in spite of* his bad teachers.

174 *indeed*

We use *indeed* to strengthen *very*.

> Thank you *very much indeed*.
> I was *very pleased indeed* to hear from you.
> He was driving *very fast indeed*.

We do not usually use *indeed* after an adjective or adverb without *very*.

(NOT *He was driving fast indeed.*)
infinitive: negative, progressive, perfect, passive

1 **Negative infinitive:** [not + infinitive]

Try **not to** be late. (NOT ... **to not be** late.)
I decided **not to** study medicine. (NOT ... **to not study**)
You’d better **not** say that again.
Why **not** tell me about your problems?
For the difference between the infinitive with and without **to**, see 179.

2 **Progressive infinitive:** [(to) be ... -ing]

It's nice to be sitting here with you.
This time tomorrow I’ll be lying on the beach.

3 **Perfect infinitive:** [(to) have + past participle]

It's nice to have finished work.
Ann said she was sorry to have missed you.
You should have told me you were coming.
For perfect infinitives after modal verbs (should, might etc), see 202.3.

4 **Passive infinitive:** [(to) be + past participle]

There's a lot of work to be done.
She ought to be told about it.
That window must be repaired before tonight.
For the meaning of passive forms, see 237.

infinitive: use

1 **Subject**

An infinitive can be the subject of a sentence.

To **learn** Chinese is not easy.
But we more often use a structure with **it** as a 'preparatory subject' (see 187), or with an -ing form as subject (see 180).

It is not easy to **learn** Chinese.
**Learning** Chinese isn’t easy.

2 **After verb**

We often use an infinitive after another verb.

It's beginning to rain.
I expect to be free tomorrow evening.
I don't want to see you again.
Some common verbs that can have an infinitive after them:

afford  happen  prefer
appear  hate  prepare
arrange  help  pretend
ask  hope  promise
(can't) bear  intend  refuse
begin  learn  remember
dare (see 94)  like  seem
decide  love  start
expect  manage  try
fail  mean  want
forget  offer  wish

Some of these verbs can be used with object + infinitive (for example I want her to be happy). For details, see 3 below. After some of these verbs, we can also use an -ing form. The meaning is not always the same (for example, try running/try to run). For details, see 182.

3 Verb + object + infinitive

After some verbs, we can use object + infinitive.

She didn't want me to go
(Not She didn't want that I go.)
I didn't ask you to pay for the meal.

Some common verbs that are used in this structure:

advise  hate  prefer
allow  help (see 158)  remind
ask  invite  teach
(can't) bear  like  tell
cause  mean  want
encourage  need  warn
expect  order  wish
get (see 143)  persuade

For verb + infinitive without to, see 179.

4 After adjective

Infinitives are used after some adjectives.

I'm pleased to see you.
John was surprised to get Ann's letter.
His accent is not easy to understand. (Not . . . to understand it.)
She's very nice to talk to. (Not . . . to talk to her.)

For structures like I'm anxious for the meeting to finish early, see 132.
For enough and too with adjective + infinitive, see 113; 348.
5 After noun

We can use infinitives after some nouns.

I have no wish to change.
I told her about my decision to leave.

The infinitive often explains the purpose of something: what it will do, or what somebody will do with it.

Have you got a key to open this door?
I need some more work to do.

For information about the structures that are possible with any verb, adjective or noun, look in a good dictionary.

For the 'infinitive of purpose', see 178.
For infinitives after who, what, how etc, see 177.
For to used instead of the whole infinitive, see 108.5.
For the use of the infinitive without to, see 179.

177 infinitive after who, what, how etc

1 In reported speech (see 282; 284), we can use an infinitive after the question-words who, what, where etc (but not why) to talk about questions and the answers to questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>question-word</th>
<th>infinitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wonder who to invite.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show me what to do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you tell me how to get to the station?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know where to put the car.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell me when to pay.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can't decide whether to answer her letter.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 We cannot begin a direct question with How to . . . ?, What to . . . ? etc. We often use shall or should.

How shall I tell her? (NOT How to tell her?)
What shall we do? (NOT What to do?)
Who should I pay? (NOT Who to pay?)

For questions beginning Why (not) + infinitive, see 179.3.

178 infinitive of purpose

We often use an infinitive to talk about a person's purpose — why he or she does something.

I sat down for a minute to rest.
He went abroad to forget.
I'm going to Austria to learn German.
In a more formal style, we often use *in order to* or *so as to*.

He got up early *in order to have time* to pack.
I moved to a new flat *so as to be near* my work.

In negative sentences, we nearly always use the structure with *so as not to* or *in order not to*.

I’m going to leave now, *so as not to be late.*
(NOT I’m going to leave now, *not to be late.*

179 infinitive without to

We usually put *to* before the infinitive (for example *I want to go; It’s nice to see you*). But we use the infinitive without *to* in the following cases:

1 Modal auxiliary verbs

After the modal auxiliary verbs will, shall, would, should, can, could, may, might and must, and after *had better*, we use the infinitive without *to*.

*I must go* now.
*Will you help* me?
*It might rain*.
*You had better stop.*

2 *let, make, hear etc*

After some verbs, we use an object and the infinitive without *to*. The most common of these verbs are *let, make, see, hear, feel, watch*, and *notice*.

She *lets her children do* what they want to.
*I made them give* me the money back.
*I didn’t see you come in*.
*I heard her say* that she was tired.

In an informal style, we often use *help* with this structure.

*Could you help me push* the car?

3 *why (not)*

We can use an infinitive without *to* after *why*. This usually means that it is unnecessary or stupid to do something.

*Why pay* more at other shops? *Our prices are the lowest.*

*Why not . . . ?* is used to make suggestions.

*Why not ask Susan to help you?*
4 **and, or, except, but, than**

We can join two infinitives with *and, or, except, but, or than*. The second infinitive is usually without *to*.

I'd like **to lie down and go** to sleep.
Do you want **to eat now or wait** till later?
We had nothing **to do except look** at the garden.
I'll **do anything but work** on a farm.
It's easier **to do it yourself than explain** to somebody else how to do it.

180 **-ing form ('gerund')**

1 **Gerund or participle**

Words like *smoking, walking* are verbs. But we can also use them as adjectives or nouns. Compare:

*You're smoking too much these days.* (part of a verb)
*There was a smoking cigarette end in the ashtray.* (adjective)

**Smoking is bad for you.** (noun: subject of sentence)

When -ing forms are used as verbs or adjectives, they are called 'present participles'. For details, see 234–236. When they are more like nouns, grammars call them 'gerunds'. For the use of gerunds, see this section and the next two.

2 **Subject, object or complement of a sentence**

An -ing form can be a subject, object or complement.

**Smoking is bad for you.** (subject)
I hate **packing** (object)
My favourite activity is **reading**. (complement)

The -ing form subject, object or complement is still a verb, and can have its own object.

**Smoking cigarettes is bad for you.**
I hate **packing suitcases**.
My favourite activity is **reading poetry**.

We can use determiners (for example *the, my*) with -ing forms.

*the opening of Parliament*
*Do you mind my smoking?*
(OR, not so formal: *Do you mind me smoking?*)

3 **After verb**

After some verbs we can use an -ing form, but not an infinitive.

I **enjoy travelling.** (NOT *I enjoy to travel*)
He's **finished mending the car**. (NOT ... *to mend ...*)
Common verbs which are followed by an *-ing* form are:

- avoid
- consider
- delay
- dislike
- enjoy
- excuse
- feel like
- finish
- forgive
- give up
- go
- help
- imagine
- keep
- mind
- miss
- practise
- put off
- risk
- (can't) help
- (can't) stand
- spend time/money
- suggest
- understand

Examples:

- I dislike arguing about money.
- Forgive my interrupting you.
- Let's go swimming.
- I can't understand his being so late.

After some verbs, we can use either an *-ing* form or an infinitive. For example: like, start, try, remember, forget.

How old were you when you started to play/playing the piano?

With some verbs, the two structures have different meanings. For details, see 182.

4 After verb (passive meaning)

After need and want, an *-ing* form has a passive meaning:

- Your hair needs cutting. ( = . . . needs to be cut.)
- The car wants servicing. ( = . . . needs to be serviced.)

5 After preposition

After prepositions we use *-ing* forms, not infinitives.

- Check the oil before starting the car. (NOT . . . before to start . . . )
- You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs.
- You can get there faster by going on the motorway.

When *to* is a preposition, we use an *-ing* form after it. (See 181.)

- I look forward to hearing from you. (NOT . . . to hear from you.)

6 *it . . . -ing*

We can use *it* as a 'preparatory subject' for an *-ing* form (see 187).

- It's nice being with you.

This is common in the structures *It's no good . . . -ing* and *It's no use . . . ing*.

- It's no good talking to him — he never listens.
- It's no use expecting her to say thank-you.

For *It's (not) worth . . . -ing*, see 368.
181 -ing form after to

We sometimes use an -ing form after to.

I look forward to seeing you. (NOT . . . to see you.)
I'm not used to getting up early.

These structures may seem strange.
In fact, to is two words:

a. a part of the infinitive

I want to go home.
Help me to understand.

b. a preposition

I look forward to your next letter.
I prefer meat to fish.
I'm not used to London traffic.

After the preposition to, we can use an -ing form, but not usually an infinitive.

I look forward to hearing from you.
(NOT . . . to hear from you.)
I prefer riding to walking.
I'm not used to driving in London.

If you want to know whether to is a preposition, try putting a noun after it. Compare:

a. I want to your letter. (Not possible: to is not a preposition. Use the infinitive after I want.)
b. I'm looking forward to your letter. (This is all right, so to is a preposition. Use the -ing form after look forward to.)

182 -ing form or infinitive?

Some verbs and adjectives can be followed by an infinitive or by an -ing form, often with a difference of meaning.

1 remember and forget

We remember or forget doing things in the past — things that we did. Forget . . . -ing is used especially in the structure I'll never forget . . . -ing.

I still remember buying my first packet of cigarettes.
I'll never forget meeting the Queen.

We remember or forget to do things which we have to do.

Did you remember to buy my cigarettes?
You mustn't forget to go and meet Mr Lewis at the station tomorrow.
2 stop
If you stop doing something, you don't do it any more.
   I really must stop smoking.
If you stop to do something, you pause (in the middle of something else) in order to do it.
   Every hour I stop work to have a little rest.

3 go on
If you go on doing something, you continue — you do it more.
   She went on talking about her illnesses until everybody went to sleep.
If you go on to do something, you do it next — you stop one thing and start another.
   She stopped talking about her illnesses and went on to tell us about all her other problems.

4 regret
You regret doing something in the past — you are sorry that you did it.
   I don't regret telling her what I thought, even if it made her angry.
The expression I regret to say/tell you/announce etc means 'I'm sorry that I have to say . . . .
   British Rail regret to announce that the 13.15 train for Cardiff will leave approximately thirty-seven minutes late. This delay is due to the late running of the train.

5 allow
After allow, we use . . . -ing in active clauses if there is no object. If there is an object, we use an infinitive.
   We don't allow smoking in the lecture room.
   We don't allow people to smoke in the lecture room.

6 see, watch and hear
If you saw, watched or heard something happening, it was happening: you saw or heard it while it was going on. If you saw, watched or heard something happen, it happened: you saw or heard a complete action. Note the infinitive without to: see 179. (For the difference between it was happening and it happened, see 242.)
   I looked out of the window and saw Mary crossing the road.
   ( = She was in the middle of crossing the road.)
   I saw Mary step off the pavement, cross the road and disappear into the post office.
7 try

Try . . . -ing = ‘make an experiment; do something to see what will happen’.

I tried sending her flowers, giving her presents, writing her letters; but she still wouldn’t speak to me.

Try to . . . = ‘make an effort’. It is used for things that are difficult.

I tried to write a letter, but my hands were too cold to hold a pen.

8 afraid

We use afraid of . . . -ing to talk about accidents.

I don’t like to drive fast because I’m afraid of crashing.

(NOT . . . I’m afraid to crash.)

In other cases, we can use afraid of. . . -ing or afraid to. . . with no difference of meaning.

I’m not afraid of telling/to tell her the truth.

9 sorry

We use sorry for . . . -ing or sorry about . . . -ing to talk about past things that we regret.

I’m sorry for/about waking you up. (= I’m sorry that I woke you up.)

We can use a perfect infinitive with the same meaning.

I’m sorry to have woken you up.

Sorry + infinitive is used to apologize for something that we are doing or going to do.

Sorry to disturb you — could I speak to you for a moment?
I’m sorry to tell you that you failed the exam.

10 certain and sure

If I say that somebody is certain/sure of doing something, I am talking about his or her feelings - he or she feels sure.

Before the game she felt sure of winning, but after five minutes she realized that it wasn’t going to be so easy.

If I say that somebody is certain/sure to do something, I am talking about my own feelings — I am sure that he or she will succeed.

‘Kroftová’s sure to win — the other girl hasn’t got a chance.’ ‘Don’t be so sure.’

11 like, love, hate, prefer, begin, start, attempt, intend, continue, can’t bear

After these verbs, we can use either the -ing form or the infinitive without much difference of meaning.
I hate working/to work at weekends.  
She began playing/to play the guitar when she was six.  
I intend telling her/to tell her what I think.

In British English, we usually use like . . . -ing to talk about enjoyment, and like to . . . to talk about choices and habits. Compare:

I like climbing mountains. I like to start work early in the morning.

After the conditionals would like, would prefer, would hate and would love, we use the infinitive.

I'd like to tell you something.  
'Can I give you a lift?' 'No, thanks, I'd prefer to walk.'  
I'd love to have a coat like that.

Compare:

Do you like dancing? ( = Do you enjoy dancing?)  
Would you like to dance? (An invitation. = Do you want to dance now?)

For the difference between used to + infinitive and be used to . . . -ing, see 353, 354.

183 instead of . . . -ing

After instead of, we can use a noun or an -ing form, but not an infinitive.

Would you like to take a taxi instead of a bus?  
Would you like to take a taxi instead of going by bus?  
(NOT . . . instead to go by bus.)

184 inversion: auxiliary verb before subject

We put an auxiliary verb before the subject of a clause in several different structures.

1 Questions (see 270)

Have your father and mother arrived?  
(= Have arrived your father and mother?)  
Where is the concert taking place?  
(= Where is taking place the concert?)

Spoken questions do not always have this word order (see 271).  
You're coming tomorrow?

Reported questions do not usually have this order (see 284).  
I wondered what time the film was starting.  
(= What time was the film starting?)
if

In a formal style, had I . . . , had he . . . etc can be used instead of if I had . . . , if he had . . . etc.

Had I known what was going to happen, I would have warned you.

( = if I had known . . . )

neither, nor, so (see 217; 312)

These words are followed by [auxiliary verb + subject].

'I'm hungry.' 'So am I.'
'I don't like Mozart.' 'Neither/Nor do I.'

Negative adverbial expressions

In a formal style, we may put a negative adverb or adverb phrase at the beginning of a clause. The order is

[negative adverb (phrase) + auxiliary + subject + verb].

Under no circumstances can we accept cheques.

Hardly had I arrived when trouble started.

only

The same thing happens with expressions containing only.

Only then did I understand what she meant.

Not only did we lose our money, but we were also in danger of losing our lives.

Exclamations

Exclamations often have the same structure as negative questions (see 120.3).

Isn't it cold!  Hasn't she got lovely eyes!

inversion: whole verb before subject

here, there etc

If we begin a sentence with here or there, we put the whole verb before the subject, if this is a noun.

Here comes Mrs Foster.  (NOT Here Mrs Foster comes.)
There goes your brother.

If the subject is a pronoun, it comes before the verb.

Here she comes.  There he goes.

This structure is possible with some other short adverbs like down, up.

So I stopped the car, and up walked a policeman.
2 Other adverbs (literary style)

In descriptive writing and story-telling, other adverbs of place can come at the beginning of a clause, followed by verb + subject.

*Under a tree was sitting* the biggest man I have ever seen.
*On the bed lay* a beautiful young girl.

3 Reporting (literary style)

In books, the subject often comes after verbs like *said*, *asked* in reporting direct speech.

'What do you mean?' *asked* Henry.

If the subject is a pronoun, it comes before the verb.

'What do you mean?' *he asked.*

186 irregular verbs

1 This is a list of common irregular verbs. You may like to learn them by heart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Simple past</th>
<th>Past participle</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arise</td>
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<td>awake</td>
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2 Verbs that are easy to confuse

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<td>lie ( = ‘say things that are not true’)</td>
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it: preparatory subject

When the subject of a sentence is an infinitive or a clause, this does not usually come at the beginning. We prefer to start the sentence with the 'preparatory subject' it.

*It's nice to be* with you.
*(To be with you is nice)* is possible, but unusual.
*It's probable that* we'll be a little late.

1. We often use this structure in sentences with *be* + adjective.

**It + be + adjective + infinitive**

*It's hard to live* on my salary.
*It is possible to go* by road or rail.
*It is important to book* in advance.

**It + be + adjective + clause**

*It's possible that* I'll be here again next week.
*It's surprising how many unhappy people there are.*
*It wasn't clear what* she meant.
*Is it true that* your father's ill?

2. We also use the structure to talk about the time that things take. (See 338.)

*It took me months to get to know her.*
*How long does it take to get to London from here?*

3. *It* can be a preparatory subject for an -ing form. This happens especially with *it's worth* (see 368) and *it's no good/use*. In other cases it is rather informal.

*It's worth going* to Wales if you have the time.
*It's no use trying* to explain — I'm not interested.
*It was nice seeing* you.

> For the use of *it* as a subject in emphatic structures, see 111.
> For 'impersonal' *it* in sentences like *It's raining*, see 247 5.
> For *it* as 'preparatory object', see 188.

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it: preparatory object

We sometimes use *it* as a preparatory object. This happens most often in the structures *make it clear that* . . . and *find/make it easy/difficult to* . . .

George *made it clear that* he wasn't interested.
*I found it easy to talk* to her.
*You make it difficult to refuse.*
189 it's time

1 We can use an infinitive after it's time.
   *It's time to buy a new car.* *It's time for you to go to bed.*

2 It's time may also be followed by a special structure with a past tense verb.
   *it's time + subject + past verb . . .
   - It's time you went to bed.
   - It's time she washed that dress.
   - I'm getting tired. It's time we went home.

For other structures in which a past verb has a present or future meaning, see 239.

190 last and the last

Last week, last month etc is the week or month just before this one. If I am speaking in July, last month was June; if I am speaking in 1985, last year was 1984. (Note that prepositions are not used before these time-expressions.)

I had a cold last week. Were you at the meeting last Tuesday? We bought this house last year.

The last week, the last month etc is the period of seven days, thirty days etc up to the moment of speaking. On July 15th, 1985, the last month is the period from June 15th to July 15th; the last year is the period from July 1984 to July 1985.

I've had a cold for the last week. ( = for the seven days up to today) We've lived here for the last year. ( = since twelve months ago)

Note the use of the present perfect tense (see 243) when talking about a period of time that continues up to the present, like the last week.

For the difference between next and the next, see 220.
Let's + infinitive without to is often used to make suggestions. It is rather like a first-person plural imperative (see 170).

Let's have a drink. ( = I think we should have a drink.)
Let's go home, shall we?

There are two possible negatives, with Let's not . . . and Don't let's . . .

Let's not get angry.  Don't let's get angry.

Let's not is considered more 'correct'.

The most important rules for writing letters are:

1. Write your address in the top right-hand corner (house-number first, then street-name, then town, etc). Do not put your name above the address.

2. Put the date under the address. One way to write the date is: number — month — year (for example 17 May 1982). For other ways, see 95.

3. In a business letter, put the name and address of the person you are writing to on the left-hand side of the page (beginning on the same level as the date).

4. Begin the letter (Dear X) on the left-hand side of the page.

5. Leave a line, and begin your first paragraph on the left-hand side. Leave another line after each paragraph, and begin each new paragraph on the left.

6. If you begin Dear Sir(s) or Dear Madam, finish Yours faithfully . . . . If you begin with the person's name (Dear Mrs Hawkins), finish Yours sincerely or Yours (more informal). Friendly letters may begin with a first name (Dear Keith) and finish with an expression like Yours or Love.

7. On the envelope, put the first name before the surname. You can write the first name in full (Mr Keith Parker), or you can write one or more initials (Mr K Parker; Mr K S Parker). Titles like Mr, Ms, Dr are usually written without a full stop in British English.
Examples of letters and envelopes

a formal

14 Plowden Road
Torquay
Devon
TQ6 1RS

The Secretary
Hall School of Design
39 Beaumont Street
London
W4 4LJ

16 June 1985

Dear Sir

I should be grateful if you would send me information about the regulations for admission to the Hall School of Design. Could you also tell me whether the School arranges accommodation for students?

Yours faithfully

Keith Parker

The Secretary
Hall School of Design
39 Beaumont Street
London
W4 4LJ
Dear Keith and Ann

Thanks a lot for a great weekend. Can I come again soon?

Bill and I were talking about the holidays. We thought it might be nice to go camping in Scotland for a couple of weeks. Are you interested? Let me know if you are, and we can talk about dates etc.

See you soon, I hope. Thanks again.

Yours

Alan

---

Keith and Ann Parker
19 West Way House
Botley Road
Oxford
OX6 5JP
193 likely

Likely means the same as 'probable', but we use it in different structures.

1 be + likely + infinitive

I'm likely to be busy tomorrow.
Are you likely to be at home this evening?
Do you think it's likely to rain?
He's unlikely to agree.

2 it is likely + that-clause

It's likely that the meeting will go on late.

194 long and for a long time

Long is most common in questions and negative sentences, and after too and so.

How long did you wait? I didn't play for long.
The concert was too long.

In affirmative sentences, we usually use a long time.
I waited (for) a long time. (I waited long is possible, but not usual.)
It takes a long time to get to her house.

Much, many and far are also more common in questions and negative sentences. (See 205 and 125.)

195 look

Look can mean 'seem' or 'appear'. This is a 'copula verb' (see 91); it is followed by adjectives.

You look angry — what's the matter?
(NOT You look angrily . . .)
The garden looks nice.

We can also use like or as if after look.

look like + noun

She looks like her mother.
'What's that bird?' 'It looks like a buzzard.'

look as if + clause

You look as if you've had a bad day.
It looks as if it's going to rain.

Look like + clause is also possible — see 49.3.
2 Look can also mean ‘turn your eyes towards something’. It can be used with adverbs.

   The boss looked at me angrily.
   She looked excitedly round the room.

   For the difference between look, watch, and see, see 196.

196 look (at), watch and see

1 See is the ordinary word to say that something ‘comes to our eyes’.

   Suddenly I saw something strange. Can you see me?
   Did you see the article about the strike in today’s paper?

   See is not used in progressive tenses with this meaning (see 225). When we want to say that we see something at the moment of speaking, we often use can see. (See B1.)

   I can see an aeroplane. (NOT am seeing . . . )

2 We use look (at) to talk about concentrating, paying attention, trying to see as well as possible. Compare:

   I looked at the photo, but I didn’t see anybody I knew.
   ‘Do you see the man in the raincoat?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Look again.’ ‘Good heavens! It’s Moriarty!’

   We use look when there is no object, and look at before an object.

   Compare:

   Look! (NOT Look at!) Look at me! (NOT Look me!)

3 Watch is like look (at), but suggests that something is happening, or going to happen. We watch things that change, move or develop.

   Watch that man — I want to know everything he does.
   I usually watch a football match on Saturday afternoon.

4 We watch TV, but we see plays and films. Compare:

   Did you watch ‘Top of the Pops’ last night? (TV)
   ‘Have you seen any of the Chaplin films?’ ‘Where are they on?’ ‘At the cinema in High Street.’

   The difference between see and look (at) is similar to the difference between hear and listen to. See 157.

   For structures with the infinitive and the -ing form after these verbs, see 182 6.

197 marry and divorce

1 Marry and divorce are used without a preposition.

   She married a builder. (NOT She married with a builder.)
   Will you marry me? Andrew’s going to divorce Carola.
When there is no direct object, we usually prefer the expressions get married and get divorced, especially in an informal style.

Lulu and Joe **got married** last week.
(Lulu and Joe **married** . . . is not so natural.)
When are you going to **get married**?
The Robinsons are **getting divorced**.

We can use get/be married with **to + object**.

She **got married to** her childhood sweetheart.
I’ve **been married to** you for sixteen years and I still don’t know what goes on inside your head.

198 **may** and **might**: forms

1 **May** is a ‘modal auxiliary verb’ (see 202). There is no -s in the third person singular.

She **may** be here tomorrow. (NOT She **may** s . . . )
Questions and negatives are made without do.

**May** I help you? (NOT Do I **may** . . . ?)
After **may**, we use the infinitive without to.
You **may be** right. (NOT You **may to be** right.)

2 **May** has no infinitive or participles. When necessary, we use other words.

She wants **to be allowed** to open a bank account.
(NOT . . . **to may open** . . . )

3 **Might** is a ‘less definite’ form of **may** — it does not have a past meaning.
We use both **may** and **might** to talk about the present and the future (see 199; 200).

4 There is a contracted negative **mightn’t**. (Mayn’t is very unusual.)

May and **might** are used mostly to talk about probability and to ask for and give permission. See 199, 200.

199 **may** and **might**: probability

1 Chances

We use **may** and **might** to say that there is a chance of something: perhaps it is true, or perhaps it will happen.

We **may** go climbing in the Alps next summer. (= Perhaps we’ll go.)
‘Where’s Emma?’ ‘I don’t know. She **may** be shopping, I suppose.’
Peter might phone. If he does, could you ask him to ring again later?
‘I **might** get a job soon.’ ‘Yes, and pigs might fly.’ (= ‘It’s very unlikely.’)
Questions

We do not use *may* in questions about probability.

*Do you think you'll go camping this summer?*

(Not *May you go camping this summer?*)

3 *might*

*Might* is not the past of *may*. It is used to talk about a smaller chance than *may*. Compare:

I *may* go to London tomorrow. (Perhaps a 50 per cent chance.)

Joe *might* come with me. (Perhaps a 30 per cent chance.)

4 Conditional

*Might* (but not *may*) can have a conditional use.

If you went to bed for an hour you *might* feel better.

(= . . . perhaps you would feel better.)

5 *may/might have . . .*

We use a special structure to talk about the chance that something happened in the past.

*may/might have + past participle*

‘Polly’s very late.’ ‘She *may have missed* her train.’

‘What was that noise?’ ‘It *might have been* a cat.’

We can use the same structure (with *might* only) to say that something was possible, but did not happen.

That was a bad place to go skiing. You *might have broken* your leg.

(Could have . . . is used in the same way. See 79.3.)

200 *may and might: permission*

1 Asking for permission

*May* and *might* can be used to ask for permission. They are more formal than *can* and *could*. *Might* is very polite and formal, and is not common.

*May I put the TV on?*  I wonder if I *might* have a little more cheese?

2 Giving and refusing permission

*May* is used to give permission. *May not* is used to refuse permission, and to forbid.

‘*May I put the TV on?*’ ‘Yes, of course you *may*.’

Students *may not* use the staff car park.

These are rather formal. In informal language, we prefer *can* and *can’t*. (See 80.)
3 Talking about permission

We do not usually use *may* and *might* to talk about permission which has already been given or refused. Instead, we use *can, could* or *be allowed to.*

*These days, children can do what they like.*

(NOT . . . *may do . . . *)

*I could* read what I liked when I was a child.

(NOT *might . . . *)

201 mind

*Mind* can mean ‘dislike’, ‘be annoyed by’, ‘object to’. We use *mind* mostly in questions and negative sentences.

*I don’t mind* you coming in late if you don’t wake me up.

‘*Do you mind* the smell of tobacco?’ ‘Not at all.’

*Do you mind . . . ?* and *Would you mind . . . ?* are often used to ask for permission, or to ask people to do things. We can use *-ing* forms or *if*-clauses.

*Do you mind/Would you mind . . . -ing . . . ?*

*Would you mind* opening the window? (= Please open the window.)

*Would you mind my opening* the window? (= Can I open the window?)

*Do you mind people smoking* in the kitchen?

*Do you mind/Would you mind if . . . ?*

*Would you mind if* I opened the window?

*Do you mind if* people smoke in the kitchen?

‘*Do you mind if* I smoke?’ ‘No, please do.’

Note that the answer ‘No’ is used to *give permission* after *Do you mind . . . ?* (*I don’t mind* means ‘I have nothing against it; it’s all right’.)

202 modal auxiliary verbs

1 Forms

Modal auxiliary verbs are *can, could, may, might, must, will, would, shall, should, ought, dare* and *need.*

Modal verbs have no -s in the third person singular.

*She might* know his address. (NOT *She mights . . . *)

Questions and negatives are made without *do.*

*Can you* swim? (NOT *Do you can swim?)

*You shouldn’t do* that. (NOT *You don’t should do that*)
After modal auxiliary verbs, we use the infinitive without to. (*Ought* is an exception: see 232.)

I *must remember* to write to Leslie.
(NOT + must to remember . . .)

2 Meanings

We do not use modal verbs for situations that definitely exist, or for things that have definitely happened. We use them, for example, to talk about things which we expect, which are possible, which we think are necessary, which we are not sure about, or which did not happen.

She *will be* here tomorrow.
I *may* come tomorrow if I have time.
She *could be* in London or Paris or Tokyo — nobody knows.
You *must* come and have dinner with us some time.
What *would* you do if you had a free year?
She *should* have seen a doctor when she first felt ill.

3 Modal verb + perfect infinitive

We use the structure [modal verb + perfect infinitive] (for example *must have seen*, *should have said*) to talk about the past. This structure is used for speculating (thinking about what possibly happened) or imagining (thinking about how things could have been different).

She's two hours late. What *can have happened*?
You *could have told* me you were coming.
The potatoes *would have been* better with more salt.
The plant's dead. You *should have given* it more water.

For more information, see the entries for *can*, *may* etc. *Dare* and *need* can be used in two ways as modal auxiliary verbs and as ordinary verbs. See 94 and 213. For information about weak and strong pronunciations of modal auxiliary verbs, see 358. For contracted forms, see 90.

203 more (of): determiner

1 We can use *more* before uncountable or plural nouns.

more + noun

We need *more time*. (NOT . . . *more of time*-

*More people* are drinking wine these days.
2 Before another determiner (for example the, my, this), we use more of. We also use more of before a pronoun.

more of + determiner + noun
more of + pronoun

Can I have some more of the red wine, please?
Have you got any more of that smoked fish?
I don't think any more of them want to come.

3 We can use more alone, without a noun.

I'd like some more, please.

For the use of more with comparative adjectives and adverbs, see 84; 87. For far more, much more and many more, see 86.

204 most (of): determiner

1 We use most before uncountable or plural nouns.

most + noun

I hate most pop music. (NOT . . . most of pop music.)
Most people disagree with me.
(NOT Most of people . . . NOT The most people . . .)

2 Before another determiner (for example the, my, this), we use most of. We also use most of before a pronoun.

most of + determiner + noun
most of + pronoun

I've eaten most of the salad.
You've read most of my books.
Most of us feel the same way.

For the use of most with superlative adjectives and adverbs, see 84; 87.

205 much, many, a lot etc

1 In an informal style, we use much and many mostly in negative sentences and questions, and after so, as and too. In affirmative sentences (except after so, as and too), we use other words and expressions. Compare:

How much money have you got?
I've got plenty. (NOT I've got much.)
I haven't got many pop records.
I've got a lot of jazz records.
(Not usually I've got many jazz records.)
You make too many mistakes.
You make lots of mistakes.
(Not usually You make many mistakes.)
We use *a lot of* and *lots of* mostly in an informal style. They are both used before uncountable (singular) and plural nouns, and before pronouns. When *a lot of* is used with a plural subject, the verb is plural; when *lots of* is used with a singular subject, the verb is singular.

### a lot of/lots of + singular subject and verb

A lot of time is needed to learn a language.

*There's* lots of coffee in the pot. (NOT *There are* lots of coffee . . .)

### a lot of/lots of + plural subject and verb

*A lot of my friends think* there's going to be a war.

(NOT *A lot of my friends thinks* . . .)

*Lots of people live* in the country and work in London.

*A lot of us would like* to change our jobs.

We use *a lot of* and *lots of* before a noun or pronoun; we use *a lot/lots* without *of* alone, when there is no noun or pronoun. Compare:

*She's lost* a lot of weight. (NOT . . . *a lot weight*)

*She's lost* a lot. (NOT . . . *a lot of*)

### A lot (of) and lots (of) are rather informal. In a more formal style we use other expressions, like a great deal (of) (+ singular), a large number (of) (+ plural), or plenty (of) (+ singular or plural).

*Mr Lucas has spent* a great deal of time in the Far East.

*We have* a large number of problems to solve.

Thirty years ago there were plenty of jobs; now there are very few.

In a formal style, we can also use *much* and *many* in affirmative sentences.

*There has been* much research into the causes of cancer.

*Many* scientists believe . . .

See also 125 (far and a long way) and 194 (long and a long time).

### 206 much (of), many (of): determiners

1 *Much* is used before uncountable (singular) nouns: *many* is used before plural nouns.

*I haven't got* much time. (NOT . . . *much of time*)

*I haven't got* many friends. (NOT . . . *much friends*)

2 We use *much of* and *many of* before other determiners (for example *the*, *my*, *this*, *these*), and before pronouns.

*How much of the* house do you want to *paint this year?*

*I don't think I'll* pass the exam; *I've missed too many of my* lessons.

*You didn't eat* much of it.

*How many of you* are there?
We can use *much* and *many* alone, without a following noun.

You *haven't eaten much*.

'Did you find any mushrooms?' 'Not *many*.'

Much and *many* are used mostly in questions and negative sentences. See 205.

207 **must**: forms

1. *Must* is a 'modal auxiliary verb' (see 202). There is no *-s* in the third person singular.

   *He must start coming on time.* (NOT *He musts* . . . )

   Questions and negatives are made without *do*.

   *Must you go?* (NOT *Do you must go?*)

   *You mustn't worry.* (NOT *You don't must worry*)

   After *must*, we use the infinitive without *to*.

   *I must write to my mother.* (NOT *I must to write* . . . )

2. *Must* has no infinitive or participles. When necessary, we use other expressions, such as *have to*.

   *He'll have to start coming on time.* (NOT *He'll must* . . . )

   *I don't want to have to tell you again.* (NOT *I don't want to must* . . . )

3. *Must* has no past tense: We can talk about past obligation with *had to*.

   *I had to push the car to start it this morning.* (NOT *I must push* . . . )

   *Must* can have a past meaning in reported speech (see 282; 283).

   *I told her she *must* be home by midnight.*

4. There is a contracted negative *mustn't*.

   For 'weak' and 'strong' pronunciations of *must*, see 358.

208 **must**: obligation

1. We use *must* to give strong advice or orders, to ourselves or other people.

   *I really must stop smoking.*

   *You must be here before eight o'clock.*

   In questions, we use *must* to ask what the hearer thinks is necessary.

   *Must I clean all the rooms?*

   *Why must you always leave the door open?*

   *Must not* or *mustn't* is used to tell people not to do things.

   *You mustn't open this parcel before Christmas Day.*
We can also use have (got) to to talk about obligation. (See 156.) For the difference between must and have (got) to, see 209.

Must is not used to talk about past obligation (must is used mainly for giving orders, and you cannot give orders in the past). For the use of had to, see 156.

For the difference between must not and don't have to, haven't got to, don't need to and needn't, see 209.

must and have to; mustn't, haven't got to, don't have to, don't need to and needn't

Must and have (got) to are not exactly the same. We usually use must to give or ask for orders — the obligation comes from the person who is speaking or listening.

We use have (got) to to talk about an obligation that comes from ‘outside’ — perhaps because of a law, or a rule, or an agreement, or because some other person has given orders. Compare:

I must stop smoking. (I want to.)
I've got to stop smoking. Doctor's orders.
This is a terrible party. We really must go home.
This is a lovely party, but we've got to go home because of the babysitter.
I've got bad toothache. I must make an appointment with the dentist.
I can't come to work tomorrow morning because I've got to see the dentist. (I have an appointment.)

Must you wear dirty old jeans all the time? (= Is it personally important for you?)
Do you have to wear a tie at work? (= Is it a rule?)

Mustn't is used to tell people not to do things: it expresses ‘negative obligation’.

Haven't got to, don't have to, don't need to and needn't are all used to say that something is unnecessary. They express absence of obligation: no obligation. Compare:

You mustn't tell George. (= Don't tell George.)
You don't have to tell Alice. (= You can if you like, but it's not necessary.)

You don't have to wear a tie to work, but you mustn't wear jeans.
(= Wear a tie or not, as you like. But no jeans.)

Haven't got to, don't have to, needn't and don't need to all mean more or less the same.
210 must: deduction

1 We can use must to say that we are sure about something (because it is logically necessary).

If A is bigger than B, and B is bigger than C, then A must be bigger than C.
Mary keeps crying. She must have some problem.
There's the doorbell. It must be Roger.
'I'm in love.' 'That must be nice.'

2 In questions and negatives, we use can and can't with this meaning, not must and mustn't.

'There's somebody at the door. Who can it be?'
'It can't be the postman. It's only seven o'clock.'
What do you think this letter can mean?

3 We use must have + past participle for deductions about the past (can have in questions and negatives).

must/can/can't have + past participle

'We went to Rome last month.' 'That must have been nice.'
I don't think he can have heard you. Call again.
Where can John have put the matches? He can't have thrown them away.

211 names and titles

We can use names and titles when we talk about people, and when we talk to them. There are differences.

1 Talking about people
2 Talking to people

When we talk to people, we can name them in two ways.

a First name.
This is usually friendly and informal.
Hello, Pamela. How are you?

b First name + surname.
This can be formal or informal.
Isn't that Peter Connolly, the actor?
We're going on holiday with Mary and Daniel Sinclair.

Title (Mr, Mrs etc) + surname.
This is more formal. We talk like this about people we do not know, or when we want to show respect or be polite.
Can I speak to Mr Lewis, please?
We've got a new teacher called Mrs Campbell.
Ask Miss Andrews to come in, please.
Dear Ms Sanders, . . .

d Surname only.
We often use just the surname to talk about public figures — politicians, sportsmen and sportswomen, writers and so on.
I don't think Eliot is a very good dramatist.
The women's marathon was won by Waitz.
We sometimes use surnames alone for employees (especially male employees), and for members of all-male groups (for example footballers, soldiers, schoolboys).
Tell Patterson to come and see me at once.
Let's put Billows in goal and move Carter up.
b Title + surname.
This is more formal or respectful.

Good morning, Mr Williamson.

Note that we do not usually use both the first name and the surname of people we are talking to. It would be unusual to say 'Hello, Peter Matthews', for example.

Note also that we do not normally use Mr, Mrs, Miss or Ms alone. If you want to speak to a stranger, for example, just say Excuse me, not Excuse me, Mr or Excuse me, Mrs (see 3 below).

3 Titles

Note the pronunciations of the titles:

Mr /ˈmɪsta(r)/  Mrs /ˈmɪsɪz/  Miss /mɪs/  Ms /mɪz, mæz/

Mr ( = Mister) is not usually written in full, and the others cannot be.

Ms is used to refer to women who do not wish to have to say whether they are married or not.

Dr (/ˈdɑːktə(r)/) is used as a title for doctors (medical and other).

Professor (abbreviated Prof) is used only for certain high-ranking university teachers.

Note that the wives and husbands of doctors and professors do not share their partners' titles. We do not say, for example, Mrs Dr Smith. Sir and madam are used mostly by shop assistants. Some employees call their male employers sir, and some schoolchildren call their male teachers sir. (Female teachers are often called miss.)

Dear Sir and Dear Madam are ways of beginning letters (see 192). In other situations sir and madam are unusual.

Excuse me. Could you tell me the time? (NOT Excuse me, sir, . . .)

212 nationality words

For each country, you need to know four words:

a. the adjective

American civilization  French perfume  Danish bacon

b. the singular noun (used for a person from the country)

an American  a Frenchman  a Dane

c. the plural expression the . . . (used for the nation)

the Americans  the French  the Danes

d. the name of the country

America  The United States  France  Denmark

The name of the language is often the same as the adjective.

Do you speak French?  Danish is difficult to pronounce.
negative questions

1 Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>auxiliary verb + n't + subject . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doesn't she understand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haven't you booked your holiday yet?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>auxiliary verb + subject + not . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does she not understand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you not booked your holiday yet?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The forms with not are formal.

2 Meaning

When we ask a negative question, we often expect the answer yes.

Didn't you go and see Helen yesterday? How is she?

Negative questions are common in exclamations and invitations.

Isn't it a lovely day!

Won't you come in for a minute?

We can use negative questions to show that we are surprised that something has not happened, or is not happening.

Hasn't the postman come yet?

Aren't you supposed to be working?

3 Polite requests

We do not usually use negative questions to ask people to do things for us. Compare:

Can you help me? (ordinary question: used for a request)

You can't help me, can you? (negative statement + question tag: common in spoken requests)

Can't you help me? (negative question: has a critical meaning — like Why can't you help me?)

See 286 for more information about polite requests.

4 yes and no

We answer negative questions like this.

'Haven't you written to Mary?'

'Yes.' ( = I have written to her.)

'No.' ( = I haven't written to her.)

'Didn't the postman come?'

'Yes.' ( = He came.) No.' ( = He didn't come.)
215 negative structures

1 Negative verbs

We make negative verbs with auxiliary verb + not.

We have not forgotten you.
It was not raining.

In an informal style, we use contracted negatives with n’t (see 90).

We haven’t forgotten you.
It wasn’t raining.

If there is no auxiliary verb, we use do with not.

I like the salad, but I don’t like the soup.

2 Imperatives

We make negative imperatives with do not or don’t + infinitive (see 170).

Don’t worry — I’ll look after you. (NOT Worry not . . .)
Don’t believe a word he says.
Don’t be rude. (See 57.)

3 Infinitives and -ing forms

We put not before infinitives and -ing forms. Do is not used.

It’s important not to worry. (NOT . . . to don’t worry.)
The best thing on holiday is not working.

4 Other parts of a sentence

We can put not with other parts of a sentence, not only a verb.

Ask the vicar, not his wife.
Come early, but not before six.
It’s working, but not properly.

We do not usually put not with the subject. Instead, we use a structure with it (see 111).

It was not George that came, but his brother.
(Not Not George came, but his brother.)

For the difference between not and no with nouns, see 222.

5 Other negative words

Other words besides not can give a clause a negative meaning.

Compare:

He’s not at home.
He’s never at home.
He’s seldom/rarely/hardly ever at home.
We do not use the auxiliary *do* with these *other* words.

Compare:

- *He doesn’t work.*
- *He never works.*
- *(NOT He does never work.)*
- *He seldom/rarely/hardly ever works.*

6 **some and any, etc**

We do not usually use *some, somebody, someone, something or somewhere* in questions and negative sentences. Instead, we use *any, anybody* etc. (See 314.)

Compare:

- I’ve found *some* mushrooms.
- I haven’t found *any* mushrooms.

7 **think, believe, suppose, imagine and hope**

When we introduce negative ideas with *think, believe, suppose* and *imagine*, we usually make the first verb (*think* etc) negative, not the second.

- *I don’t think you’ve met my wife.*
- *(NOT I think you haven’t met my wife.)*
- *I don’t believe she’s at home.*
- *Hope is an exception (see 162).*
  - *I hope it doesn’t rain.*
  - *(NOT I don’t hope it rains.)*

Short answers are possible with *not* after the verb.

- ‘Will it rain?’ *I hope not.*

With *believe, imagine* and *think*, we prefer the structure with *not . . . so* (see 311).

- ‘Will it rain?’ *I don’t think so.*

▷ For negative questions, see 214.

216 **neither (of): determiner**

1 We use *neither* before a singular noun to mean ‘not one and not the other’.

*neither + singular noun*

- ‘Can you come on Monday or Tuesday?’ *I’m afraid neither day is possible.*
We use neither of before another determiner (for example the, my, these), and before a pronoun. The noun or pronoun is plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>neither of + determiner + plural noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neither of my brothers can sing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither of us saw it happen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After neither of + noun/pronoun, we use a singular verb in a formal style.

Neither of my sisters is married.

In an informal style, a plural verb is possible.

Neither of my sisters are married.

We can use neither alone, without a noun or pronoun.

'Which one do you want?' 'Neither.'

neither, nor and not . . . either

1 We use neither and nor to mean 'also not'. They mean the same. Neither and nor come at the beginning of a clause, and are followed by auxiliary verb + subject.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>neither/nor + auxiliary verb + subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'I can't swim.' 'Neither can I.' (NOT I also can't.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'I don't like opera.' 'Nor do I.' (NOT don't like opera.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 We can use not . . . either with the same meaning.

'I can't swim.' 'I can't either.'

'I don't like opera.' 'I don't either.'

For other uses of either, see 106, 107.

For so am I, so do I etc. see 312.

neither . . . nor . . .

We use this structure to join two negative ideas. (It is the opposite of both . . . and . . .)

Neither James nor Virginia was at home.

I neither smoke nor drink.

The film was neither well made nor well acted.

In an informal style, we can use a plural verb after two subjects joined by neither . . . nor . . .

Neither James nor Virginia were at home.
219 next and nearest

1 Nearest is used for place — it means 'most near in space'.

Excuse me. Where's the nearest tube station?
(NOT . . . the next tube station?)
If you want to find Alan, just look in the nearest pub.

Next is usually used for time — it means 'nearest in the future'.
We get off at the next station ( = the station that we will reach first)
I'm looking forward to her next visit.

2 We use next in a few expressions to mean 'nearest in space'.
The most common are next door and next to.
My girl-friend lives next door.
Come and sit next to me.

220 next and the next

Next week, next month etc is the week or month just after this one. If I am speaking in July, next month is August; if I am speaking in 1985, next year is 1986. (Note that prepositions are not used before these time-expressions.)

Goodbye! See you next week!
I'm spending next Christmas with my family.
Next year will be difficult. ( = the year starting next January)

The next week, the next month etc can mean the period of seven days, thirty days etc starting at the moment of speaking. On July 15th, 1985,
the next month is the period from July 15th to August 15th; the next year is the period from July 1985 to July 1986.

I'm going to be very busy for the next week. (= the seven days starting today)  
The next year will be difficult. (= the twelve months starting now)  

For the difference between last and the last, see 190.

221 no and none

1 We use no ( = 'not a', 'not any') immediately before a noun.
   
   no + noun
   
   No aeroplane is 100% safe.
   There's no time to talk about it now.

   Before another determiner (for example the, my, this), we use none of.
   We also use none of before a pronoun.
   
   none of + determiner + noun
   none of + pronoun
   
   None of the keys would open the door.
   None of my brothers remembered my birthday.
   None of us speaks French.

   When we use none of with a plural noun, the verb can be singular (more formal) or plural (more informal).
   
   None of my friends is/are interested.
We can use *none* alone, without a noun.

'How many of the books have you read?' *None.*

When we are talking about two people or things, we use *neither*, not *none* (see 216).

*Neither of my parents could be there.*

(Not *None of . . .*)

For *no* and *not a/not any*, see 223.

### 222 no and not

If we want to make a word, expression or clause negative, we use *not*.

*Not surprisingly*, we missed the train.

(Not *No surprisingly: . . .*)

The students went on strike, but not the teachers.

(Not . . . but *no the teachers*)

I can see you tomorrow, but *not on Thursday*.

I have not received his answer.

We can use *no* with a noun to mean 'not a' or 'not any' (see 223).

*No teachers* went on strike. (= There were *not any* teachers on strike.)

I've got *no Thursdays* free this term. (= . . . *not any* Thursdays . . .)

I telephoned, but there was *no answer* (= . . . *not an* answer.)

Sometimes verb + *not* and *no* + noun can give a similar meaning.

*There wasn't an answer* / *There was no answer*

We can use *no* with an *-ing* form.

*NO SMOKING*

### 223 no and not a/not any

1 *No* is a determiner (see 96). We use *no* before singular (countable and uncountable) nouns and plural nouns.

*No* means the same as *not a* or *not any*, but we use *no*:

(a) at the beginning of a sentence

(b) when we want to make the negative idea emphatic.

a *No cigarette* is completely harmless.

(Not *Not any* cigarette . . .)

*No beer?* How do you expect me to sing without beer?

*No tourists* ever come to our village.

b I can't get there. There's *no bus*.

(More emphatic than *There isn't a bus.*)

Sorry I can't stop. I've got *no time*

There were *no letters* for you this morning, I'm afraid.
2 Nobody, nothing, no-one and nowhere are used in similar ways to no. Compare:

Nobody came. (NOT Not anybody came.)
I saw nobody. (More emphatic than I didn't see anybody.)

3 We only use no immediately before a noun. In other cases we use none (of). See 221.

224 no more, not any more, no longer, not any longer

We use no more to talk about quantity or degree — to say 'how much'.
There's no more bread. She's no more a great singer than I am.

We do not use no more to talk about time. Instead, we use no longer (usually before the verb), not . . . any longer, or not . . . any more.

I no longer support the Conservative Party. (NOT No more . . . )
This can't go on any longer.
Annie doesn't live here any more. (Not . . . any more is informal.)

225 non-progressive verbs

1 Some verbs are never used in progressive forms.

I like this music. (NOT I'm liking this music.)

Other verbs are not used in progressive forms when they have certain meanings. Compare:

I see what you mean. (NOT I'm seeing what you mean.)
I'm seeing the doctor at ten o'clock.

Many of these 'non-progressive' verbs refer to mental activities (for example know, think, believe). Some others refer to the senses (for example smell, taste).

2 The most important 'non-progressive' verbs are:

like dislike love hate prefer want wish
surprise impress please
believe feel (see 128) imagine know mean realize
recognize remember suppose think (see 346) understand
hear see (see 290) smell (see 310) sound (see 318)
taste (see 340)

weigh (= 'have weight') belong to contain depend on
include matter need owe own possess

appear seem be (see 59)

3 We often use can with see, hear, feel, taste and smell to give a 'progressive' meaning. See 81.
noun + noun

1 Structure

It is very common in English to put two nouns together without a preposition.

*tennis shoes*  *a sheepdog*  *the car door*  *orange juice*

The first noun is like an adjective in some ways. Compare:

*a race-horse*  ( = a sort of horse)
*a horse-race*  ( = a sort of race)
*a flower garden*  ( = a sort of garden)
*a garden flower*  ( = a sort of flower)
*milk chocolate*  ( = something to eat)
*chocolate milk*  ( = something to drink)

The first noun is usually singular in form, even if the meaning is plural.

*a shoe-shop*  (NOT *a shoes-shop*)
*a bus-stop*  (NOT *a buses-stop*)

Some common short /noun + noun/ expressions are written as one word (for example *sheepdog*). Others are written with a hyphen (for example *horse-race*) or separately (for example *milk chocolate*). There are no very clear rules, and we can often write an expression in more than one way. To find out what is correct in a particular case, look in a good dictionary.

2 Meaning

The first noun can modify the second in many different ways. It can say what the second is made of or from:

*milk chocolate*  *a glass bowl*

or where it is:

*a table lamp*  *Oxford University*

or when it happens:

*a daydream*  *afternoon tea*

or what it is for:

*car keys*  *a conference room*

3 Noun + noun + noun + noun . . .

We can put three, four or more nouns in a group.

*road accident research centre*  ( = a centre for research into accidents on roads)

Newspaper headlines often have this structure.

*HELICOPTER CRASH PILOT DEATH FEAR*
4 Other structures

It is not always easy to know whether to use the noun + noun structure (for example the chair back), the of-structure (for example the back of his head) or the possessive structure (for example John's back). The rules are very complicated; experience will tell you which is the correct structure in a particular case.

227 numbers

1 Fractions

We say fractions like this:

- one eighth
- three sevenths
- two fifths
- eleven sixteenths

We normally use a singular verb after fractions below 1.

Three quarters of a ton is too much.

We use a plural noun with fractions and decimals over 1.

- one and a half hours
- 1.3 millimetres

2 Decimals

We say decimal fractions like this:

- 0.125 nought point one two five
- 3.7 three point seven

3 nought, zero, nil etc

The figure 0 is usually called nought in British English, and zero in American English.

When we say numbers one figure at a time, 0 is often called oh (like the letter 0).

My account number is four one three oh six.

In measurements of temperature, 0 is called zero.

Zero degrees Centigrade is thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit.

Zero scores in team games are called nil (American zero). Zero in tennis and similar games is called love.

4 Telephone numbers

We say each figure separately. When the same figure comes twice, we usually say double (British English only).

307 4922 three oh seven four nine double two.
5 Kings and Queens

We say the numbers like this:

Henry VIII  Henry the Eighth (NOT Henry Eight)
Louis XIV  Louis the Fourteenth

6 Floors

The ground floor of a British house is the first floor of an American house; the British first floor is the American second floor, etc.

In British English, we use and between the hundreds and the tens in a number.

310  three hundred and ten (US three hundred ten)
5,642  five thousand, six hundred and forty-two

Note that in writing we use commas (,) to separate thousands.

7 and

In British English, we use and between the hundreds and the tens in a number.

8 a and one

We can say a hundred or one hundred, a thousand or one thousand. One is more formal.

I want to live for a hundred years.
(Pay Mr J Baron one thousand pounds. on a cheque)

We only use a at the beginning of a number. Compare:

a hundred  three thousand one hundred

We can use a with other measurement words.

a pint  a foot  a mile
9 Plurals without -s

After a number or determiner, hundred, thousand, million and dozen have no final -s. Compare:

five hundred pounds
hundreds of pounds
several thousand times
It cost thousands.

Other number expressions have no -s when they are used as adjectives.

a five-pound note  a three-mile walk

10 Measurements

We use be in measurements.

She's five feet eight (inches tall).
I'm sixty-eight kilos.
What shoe size are you?

In an informal style, we often use foot instead of feet when we talk about people's heights.

My father's six foot two.

11 Money

1p one penny (informal: one p /pi:/) or a penny
5p five pence (informal: five p)
£3.75 three pounds seventy-five

When we use sums of money as adjectives, we use singular forms.

a five-pound note (NOT a five-pounds note)

12 Adjectives

When expressions of measurement, amount and quantity are used as adjectives, they are normally singular.

a ten-mile walk (NOT a ten-miles walk)
six two-hour lessons
a three-month-old baby

We can use possessives in expressions of time.

a week's holiday  four days' journey

13 there are . . .

When we count the number of people in a group, we often use the structure there are + number + of + pronoun.

There are only seven of us here today.
There were twelve of us in my family.
( NOT We were twelve . . .)
14 Spoken calculations

Common ways of calculating are:

- \[2 + 2 = 4\] \(\text{two and two is/are four (informal)}\)
- \[2 \text{ plus two equals four (formal)}\]
- \[7 - 4 = 3\] \(\text{four from seven is three (informal)}\)
- \[7 \text{ minus four equals three (formal)}\]
- \[3 \times 4 = 12\] \(\text{three fours are twelve (informal)}\)
- \[9 \div 3 = 3\] \(\text{three multiplied by four equals twelve (formal)}\)

For ways of saying and writing dates, see 95.

228 once

When once has the indefinite meaning 'at some time', we use it to talk about the past, but not the future. Compare:

- I met her once in Venezuela.
- Once upon a time there were three baby rabbits . . .
- Come up and see me some time. (NOT . . . once-
- We must have a drink together one day. (NOT . . . once-

229 one and you: indefinite personal pronouns

1 We can use one or you to talk about people in general.

- You can’t learn a language in six weeks.
- One can’t learn a language in six weeks.

One is more formal.

2 One and you mean ‘anybody (including the speaker)’. They are only used to talk about people in general. We do not say you or one when we are talking about one person, or a group which could not include the speaker. Compare:

- One usually knocks at a door before going into somebody’s house.
- Somebody’s knocking at the door. (NOT One is knocking . . .)
- One can usually find people who speak English in Sweden.
- English is spoken in this shop. (NOT One speaks English. The meaning is not ‘people in general’.)
- One has to believe in something.
- In the sixteenth century people believed in witches.
  (NOT . . . one believed . . . The group could not include the speaker.)

3 One can be a subject or object; there is a possessive one’s, and a reflexive pronoun oneself.

- He talks to one like a teacher. One’s family can be very difficult.
- One should always give oneself plenty of time to pack.
230  one: substitute word

1  We often use one instead of repeating a noun.
   I'm looking for a flat. I'd like one with a garden.
   (= ... a flat with a garden.)
   'Can you lend me a pen?' 'Sorry, I haven't got one.'
   'Which is your child?' 'The one in the blue coat.'

2  We only use a/an before one if there is an adjective. Compare:
   I'd like a big one with cream on.
   I'd like one with cream on. (NOT ... a one ... )

3  There is a plural ones, used after the or an adjective.
   'Which shoes do you want?' 'The ones at the front of the window.'
   How much are the red ones?
   Compare:
   I've got five green ones.
   I've got five. (NOT ... five ones.)

4  We only use one for countable nouns. Compare:
   If you haven't got a fresh chicken I'll take a frozen one.
   If you haven't got fresh milk I'll take tinned. (NOT ... tinned one.)

231  other and others

When other is an adjective, it has no plural.
   Where are the other photos? (NOT ... the others photos?)
   Have you got any other colours?

When other is used alone, without a noun, it can have a plural.
   Some grammars are easier to understand than others.
   I'll be late. Can you tell the others?

▷ For another, see 33.

232  ought

1  Forms
   Ought is a 'modal auxiliary verb' (see 202). The third person singular has
   no -s.
   She ought to understand.

   We usually make questions and negatives without do.
   Ought we to go now? (NOT Do we ought ... ?)
   It oughtn't to rain today.
After *ought*, we use the infinitive with *to*. (This makes *ought* different from other modal auxiliary verbs.)

You *ought to see* a dentist.

2 **Obligation**

We can use *ought* to advise people (including ourselves) to do things; to tell people that they have a duty to do things; to ask about our duty. The meaning is similar to the meaning of *should* (see 294); not so strong as *must* (see 208).

*What time *ought* I to arrive?*

*I really *ought* to phone Mother.*

*People *ought* not to drive like that.*

3 **Deduction**

We can use *ought* to say that something is probable (because it is logical or normal).

*Henry *ought* to be here soon — he left home at six.*

*‘We’re spending the winter in Miami.’ ‘That *ought* to be nice.’*

4 **ought to have . . .**

We can use *ought* + perfect infinitive to talk about the past. This structure is used to talk about things which did not happen, or which may or may not have happened (see 202.3).

*I *ought to have phoned* Ed this morning, but I forgot.*

*Ten o’clock: she *ought to have arrived* at her office by now.*

For the differences between *ought*, *should* and *must*, see 295.

233 **own**

1 We only use *own* after a possessive word.

*It’s nice if a child can have his own room.*

*(NOT . . . an own room:)*

*I’m my own boss.*

2 Note the structure *a . . . of one’s own.*

*It’s nice if a child can have a room of his own.*

*I’d like to have a car of my own.*

3 We can use *own* without a following noun.

*‘Would you like one of my cigarettes?’ ‘No thanks. I prefer my own.’*
participles: ‘present’ and ‘past’ participles (-ing and -ed)

1 ‘Present’ participles:

   breaking   going   drinking   making   beginning
   opening   working   stopping

For rules of spelling, see 321; 322.
When -ing forms are used like nouns, they are often called gerunds. For
details, see 180.1.

2 ‘Past’ participles:

   broken   gone   drunk   made   begun   opened
   worked   stopped

3 The names ‘present’ and ‘past’ participle are not very good (although
they are used in most grammars). Both kinds of participle can be used
to talk about the past, present or future.

   She was crying when I saw her. (past)
   Who’s the man talking to Elizabeth? (present)
   This time tomorrow I’ll be lying on the beach. (future)
   He was arrested in 1972. (past)
   You’re fired. (present)
   The new school is going to be opened next week. (future)

4 We use participles with auxiliary verbs to make some tenses.

   What are you doing?

   I’ve broken my watch.

   For other ways of using participles, see the next two sections.

participles used as adjectives

1 We can often use participles as adjectives.

   It was a very tiring meeting.
   There are broken toys all over the floor.
   I thought the film was pretty boring.
   You look terribly frightened.

2 Don’t confuse pairs of words like tiring and tired, interesting and
interested, boring and bored, exciting and excited.
The present participle ( . . . -ing) has an active meaning: if something
is interesting it interests you.
The past participle ( . . . -ed) has a passive meaning: an interested
person is interested by (or in) something.
Compare:

I thought the lesson was interesting.
I was interested in the lesson.
(NOT I was interesting in the lesson.)

Sheila’s party was pretty boring.
I went home early because I felt bored.
(NOT . . . because I felt boring.)

It was an exciting story.
When I read it I felt excited.

The explanation was confusing. I got confused.
It was a tiring day. It made me tired.

3 There are a few exceptional past participles which can have active meanings. The most important:

fallen rocks  a retired army officer
a grown-up daughter an escaped prisoner

236 participle clauses

1 We can use a participle rather like a conjunction, to introduce a participle clause.

Who’s the fat man sitting in the corner?
Do you know the number of people employed by the government?

Jumping into a small red sports car, she drove off.

2 Participle clauses can have different uses. Some of them are ‘adjectival’: they modify nouns, rather like adjectives or relative clauses (see 280). Compare:

What’s the name of the noisy child? (adjective)
What’s the name of the child making the noise? (participle clause)
What’s the name of the child who is making the noise? (relative clause)

Other participle clauses are ‘adverbial’. They may express ideas of time, cause, consequence or condition, for example.

Putting down my newspaper, I walked over to the window.
(time: one thing happened before another)
I sat reading some old letters
(time: two things happened at the same time)

Not knowing what to do, I telephoned the police.
(reason: Because I did not know . . . )

It rained all the time, completely ruining our holiday.
(consequence: . . . so that it ruined our holiday.)

Driven carefully, the car will do fifteen kilometres to the litre of petrol.
(condition: If it is driven carefully . . . )
3 The subject of a participle clause is usually the same as the subject of the rest of the sentence.

Hoping to surprise her, I opened the door very quietly.
(I hoped to surprise her; I opened the door.)

Wanting some excitement, Mary became a pilot.
(Mary wanted excitement; Mary became a pilot.)

We do not usually make sentences where the subjects are different. For example, we would probably not say:

Looking out of the window, the mountains were beautiful.
(This sounds as if the mountains were looking out of the window.)

4 Sometimes a participle clause has its own subject.

A little girl walked past, her hair blowing in the wind.

We often use with to introduce clauses like this.

A car drove past with smoke pouring out of the back.

With all the family travelling in America, the house seems very empty.

5 We can use conjunctions and prepositions to introduce participle clauses.

After talking to you I always feel better.
Before driving off, always check your mirror.
When telephoning London from abroad, dial 1 before the number.
On being introduced to somebody, a British person may shake hands.
I got there by taking a new route through Worcester.

For -ing clauses after see, hear + object (for example I saw her crossing the road), see 182.6.

237 passive structures: introduction

They built [this house] in 1486. (active)
This house [was built] in 1486. (passive)

Channel Islanders speak [French] and English. (active)
French [is spoken] in France, Belgium, Switzerland, the Channel Islands, . . . (passive)

A friend of ours is repairing [the roof]. (active)
The roof [is being repaired] by a friend of ours. (passive)

This book will change [your life].
Your life [will be changed] by this book.
When we say what people or things do, we use active verbs. (For example built, speak, is repairing, will change.)

When we say what happens to people or things — what is done to them — we use passive verbs. (For example was built, is spoken, is being repaired, will be changed.)

The object of an active verb corresponds to the subject of a passive verb.

ACTIVE:  
A does B

PASSIVE:  
B is done (by A).

2 Active or passive?

We often prefer to begin a sentence with something that is already known, and to put the 'news' at the end. Compare:

Your little boy broke my kitchen window this morning.

That window was broken by your little boy.

In the first sentence, the hearer does not know about the broken window. So the speaker starts with the little boy, and puts the 'news' — the window — at the end. In the second sentence, the hearer knows about the window, but does not know who broke it. By using a passive structure, we can again put the 'news' at the end.

Another example:

'John's writing a play.' 'I didn't know that.'

'This play was written by Marlowe.' 'Was it? I didn't know that.'
To make passive verb forms, we use the auxiliary be. For details, see next section.

For information about the use of get as a passive auxiliary, see 143.3. For verbs with two objects (for example give) in passive structures, see 356.4. For prepositions at the end of passive clauses (for example He's been written to), see 257.1c.

### 238 Passive verb forms

We make passive verb forms with the different tenses of be, followed by the past participle (= pp).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TENSE</th>
<th>STRUCTURE</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>simple present</td>
<td>am/are/is + pp</td>
<td>English is spoken here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td></td>
<td>Excuse the mess: the house is being painted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progressive</td>
<td>am/are/is being + pp</td>
<td>I wasn't invited, but I went anyway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>simple past</td>
<td>was/were + pp</td>
<td>I felt as if I was being watched.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past</td>
<td>was/were being + pp</td>
<td>Has Mary been told?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>progressive</td>
<td></td>
<td>I knew why I had been chosen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>have/has been + pp</td>
<td>You'll be told when the time comes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td>had been + pp</td>
<td>Everything will have been done by Tuesday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td>will be + pp</td>
<td>Who's going to be invited?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'going to'</td>
<td>going to be + pp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Future progressive passives and perfect progressive passives (will be being + pp and has been being + pp) are very unusual. Passive tenses follow the same rules as active tenses. Look in the index to see where to find information about the use of the present progressive, present perfect, etc.

### 239 Past tense with present or future meaning

A past tense does not always have a past meaning. In some kinds of sentence we use verbs like I had, you went or I was wondering to talk about the present or future.
1 After if (see 165).
   If I had the money now I'd buy a car.
   If you caught the ten o'clock train tomorrow you could be in Edinburgh by supper-time.

2 After it's time (see 189), would rather (see 370) and I wish (see 367).
   Ten o'clock — it's time you went home.
   Don't come and see me today — I'd rather you came tomorrow.
   I wish I had a better memory.

3 We can express politeness or respect, when we ask for something, by beginning I wondered, I thought, I hoped, I was wondering, I was thinking or I was hoping.
   I wondered if you were free this evening.
   I thought you might like some flowers.
   I was hoping we could have dinner together.

4 If we are talking about the past, we usually use past tenses even for things which are still true, and situations which still exist.
   Are you deaf? I asked how old you were.
   I'm sorry we left Liverpool. It was such a nice place.
   Do you remember that nice couple we met on holiday? They were German, weren't they?

240 past time: the past and perfect tenses (introduction)

We can use six different tenses to talk about the past:
- the simple past (I worked)
- the past progressive (I was working)
- the present perfect simple (I have worked)
- the present perfect progressive (I have been working)
- the past perfect simple (I had worked)
- the past perfect progressive (I had been working)

The two past tenses (simple past and past progressive) are used to talk about past actions and events.
   I worked all day yesterday.
   The boss came in while I was working.

The two present perfect tenses are used to show that a past action or event has some connection with the present.
   I've worked with children before, so I know what to expect in my new job.
   I've been working all day — I've only just finished.
The past perfect tenses are used for a ‘before past’ — for things that had already happened before the past time that we are talking about.

I looked carefully, and realized that I had seen her somewhere before. I was tired, because I had been working all day.

241 past time: simple past

1 Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I worked</td>
<td>did I work?</td>
<td>I did not work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you worked</td>
<td>did you work?</td>
<td>you did not work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it worked, etc</td>
<td>did he/she/it work?</td>
<td>he/she/it did not work, etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Meanings

We use the simple past tense to talk about many kinds of past events: short, quickly finished actions and happenings, longer situations, and repeated events.

Peter broke a window last night.

I spent all my childhood in Scotland.
Regularly every summer, Janet fell in love.

We use the simple past in 'narrative' — when we tell stories, and when we tell people about past events.

Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess who lived with her father. One day the king decided ...

I saw John this morning. He told me ...

(Not have seen John this morning. He has told me ...) 

A simple rule: use the simple past tense if you do not have a good reason for using one of the other past or perfect tenses.

42 past time: past progressive

1 Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was working</td>
<td>was I working?</td>
<td>I was not working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you were working,</td>
<td>were you working?</td>
<td>you were not working,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc</td>
<td>etc</td>
<td>etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Meaning

We use the past progressive to say that something was going on around a particular past time.

What were you doing at eight o'clock yesterday evening?

We often use the past progressive together with a simple past tense. The past progressive refers to a longer 'background' action or situation; the simple past refers to a shorter action or situation that happened in the middle, or interrupted it.
While A was happening

As I was walking down the road

The phone rang while I was having dinner.

Some verbs are not used in progressive tenses. (See 225.)

I tried a bit of the cake to see how it tasted.

(NOT . . . how it was tasting)

For I was wondering if you could help me, and similar structures, see 239.3.

243 past time: present perfect simple

1 Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have worked</td>
<td>have I worked?</td>
<td>I have not worked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you have worked,</td>
<td>have you worked?</td>
<td>you have not worked,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc</td>
<td>etc</td>
<td>etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Meaning

We use the present perfect simple to say that something in the past is connected with the present in some way.

If we say that something has happened, we are thinking about the past and the present at the same time.

We could often change a present perfect sentence into a present sentence with the same meaning.

I've broken my leg. = My leg is broken now.

Have you read the Bible? = Do you know the Bible?

We do not use the present perfect simple if we are not thinking about the present.

I saw Lucy yesterday.

(Not have seen Lucy yesterday.)

3 Finished actions: result now

We often use the present perfect to talk about finished actions, when we are thinking of their present consequences: the results that they have now.
Somebody has shot the manager. The manager is dead.

FINISHED ACTION

RESULT NOW

Other examples:

Have you read the Bible?  Do you know the Bible?
Mary has had a baby.  Baby.
I've broken my leg.  I can't walk.
Utopia has invaded Fantasia.  War.

FINISHED ACTION

RESULT NOW

We often use the present perfect to give news.

And here are the main points of the news again. The pound has fallen against the dollar. The Prime Minister has said that the government's economic policies are working. The number of unemployed has reached five million. There has been a fire . . .

4 Finished actions: time up to now

We often use the present perfect to ask if something has ever happened; to say that it has happened before; or that it has never happened; or not since a certain date; or not for a certain period; to ask if it has happened yet; or to say that it has happened already.

Have you ever seen a ghost?

I've never seen a ghost.

I'm sure we've met before.  We haven't had a holiday for ages.
I haven't seen Peter since Christmas.
'Has Ann come yet?' 'Yes, she has already arrived.'
5 Repeated actions up to now

We use the present perfect to say that something has happened several times up to the present.

\[ I've \ \text{written} \ \text{six letters since lunchtime.} \]

How often \textbf{have you been} in love in your life?

6 Actions and states continuing up to now

We use the present perfect to talk about actions, states and situations which started in the past and still continue.

\begin{align*}
\text{PAST} & \quad \text{I've studied hard for years} \quad \text{NOW} \\
\text{PAST} & \quad \text{I've known him since 1960} \quad \text{NOW} \\
\text{PAST} & \quad \text{I've always liked you} \quad \text{NOW} \\
\text{PAST} & \quad \text{How long have you been here?} \quad \text{NOW} \\
\text{PAST} & \quad \text{We've always lived here} \quad \text{NOW}
\end{align*}

We also use the present perfect progressive in this way. 
For the difference, see 244.4.
Do not use the simple present to say how long something has gone on.

\[ I've \ \text{known} \ \text{him since 1960. (NOT I know him . . .)} \]

7 Present perfect not used

We do \textit{not} use the present perfect with adverbs of finished time (like yesterday, last week, then, three years ago, in 1960).

\begin{align*}
\text{I saw Lucy yesterday. (NOT I have seen Lucy yesterday.)} \\
\text{Tom was ill last week. (NOT Tom has been ill last week)} \\
\text{What did you do then? (NOT What have you done then?)} \\
\text{She died three years ago (NOT She has died three years ago.)} \\
\text{He was born in 1960. (NOT He has been born in 1960.)}
\end{align*}

We do not use the present perfect in ‘narrative’ — when we tell stories, or give details of past events. (See 241.)

\[ \text{For the structure This is the first time I have . . . , see 246.} \]
244 past time: present perfect progressive

1 Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
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<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have been working</td>
<td>have I been working?</td>
<td>I have not been working, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you have been</td>
<td>have you been</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working, etc</td>
<td>working? etc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Meaning

We use the present perfect progressive to talk about actions, states and situations which started in the past and still continue, or which have just stopped.

Have you been waiting long?
3 **since and for**

We often use the present perfect progressive with *since* or *for*, to say how long something has been going on.

- *It's been raining* non-stop *since* Monday.
- *It's been raining* non-stop *for* three days.
- *We've been living* here *since* July.
- *We've been living* here *for* two months.

We use *since* when we mention the beginning of the period (for example Monday, July).

We use *for* when we mention the length of the period (for example three days; two months).

For the differences between *since*, *for*, *from* and *ago*, see 133.

4 **Present perfect simple and progressive**

We can use both the present perfect simple and the present perfect progressive to talk about actions and situations which started in the past and which still continue.

We prefer the present perfect progressive for more temporary actions and situations; when we talk about more permanent (long-lasting) situations, we prefer the present perfect simple. Compare:

- *That man's been standing* on the corner all day.
- *For 900 years, the castle has stood* on the hill above the village.

- *I haven't been working* very well recently.
- *He hasn't worked* for years.

5 **Present perfect progressive and present**

To say how long something has been going on, we can use the present perfect progressive, but not the present.

- *I've been working* since six this morning. (NOT *I am working* . . .
- *She's been learning* English for six years.

(Some verbs are not used in progressive forms (see 225).

- *I've only known* her for two days.
- *I've had a cold* since Monday. (NOT *I've been having* . . .)
245 past time: past perfect simple and progressive

1 Forms

**Past perfect simple**

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>you had worked</td>
<td>had you worked?</td>
<td>you had not worked,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he had worked, etc</td>
<td>had he worked? etc</td>
<td>etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Past perfect progressive**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I had been working</td>
<td>had I been working?</td>
<td>I had not been</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you had been working,</td>
<td>had you been working?</td>
<td>working, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc</td>
<td>etc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Meaning

We use the past perfect simple to 'go back' to a 'second past'. If we are already talking about the past, we use the past perfect simple to talk about things that had already happened at the time we are talking about.

\[\text{I realized that we had met before.}\]

\[I \text{ got to the party late. When I arrived, Lucy had already gone home.}\]

We often use the past perfect simple in reported speech, to talk about things that had already happened at the time when we were talking or thinking.

\[I \text{ told her that I had finished.}\]

\[I \text{ wondered who had left the door open.}\]

\[I \text{ thought I had sent the cheque a week before.}\]
3 Past perfect progressive

We use the past perfect progressive to talk about longer actions or situations, which had continued up to the past moment that we are thinking about.

When I found Mary, she had been crying for several hours.

4 if etc

After if, if only, wish and would rather, the past perfect is used to talk about things that did not happen. (See 165, 167, 367 and 370.)

If I had gone to university I would have studied medicine.
I wish you had told me the truth.

246 perfect tenses with this is the first time . . . , etc

1 We use a present perfect tense after the following expressions:

This/that/it is the first/second/third/fourth/etc
This/that/it is the only . . .
This/that/it is the best/worst/finest/most interesting/etc

Examples:
This is the first time (that) I've heard her sing.
(NOT . . . that I hear her sing.)
That's the third time you've asked me that question.
(NOT . . . the third time you ask me . . .)
It's one of the most interesting books I've ever read.

2 When we talk about the past, we use a past perfect tense after the same expressions.

It was the third time he had been in love that year.
(NOT . . . the third time he was . . .)

247 personal pronouns (I, me, it etc)

1 The words I, me, you, he, him, she, her, it, we, us, they and them are called 'personal pronouns'. This is not a very good name: these words are used for both persons and things.
Me, you, him, her, us and them are not only used as objects. We can use them in other ways (see 331).

‘Who’s there?’ Me. I’m older than her.

We can use it to refer to a person when we are identifying somebody (saying who somebody is). Compare:

‘Who’s that?’ ‘It’s John Cook. He’s a friend of my father’s.’

(NOT He’s John Cook. NOT It’s a friend . . .)

We use it to refer to nothing, everything and all.

Nothing happened, did it?
Everything’s all right, isn’t it?
I did all I could, but it wasn’t enough.

We use it as an ‘empty’ subject (with no meaning) to talk about time, weather, temperature and distances.

It’s ten o’clock.
It’s Monday again.
It rained for three days.
It’s thirty degrees.
It’s ten miles to the nearest petrol station.

It can mean ‘the present situation’.

It’s terrible — everybody’s got colds, and the central heating isn’t working.
Isn’t it lovely here?

We cannot leave out personal pronouns.

It’s raining. (NOT is-raining.)
She loved the picture because it was beautiful.
(NOT . . . because was beautiful.)
They arrested him and put him in prison.
(NOT . . . put in prison.)
‘Have some chocolate.’ ‘No, I don’t like it.’
(NOT . . . +don’t like.)

Note that we do not always put it after I know.
‘It’s getting late.’ I know (NOT +know it.)

One subject is enough. We do not normally need a personal pronoun if there is already a subject in the clause.

My car is parked outside. (NOT My car it is parked . . .)
The boss really makes me angry. (NOT The boss he really . . .)
The situation is terrible. (NOT It is terrible the situation.)

For the use of it as a ‘preparatory subject’ for an infinitive or a clause, see 187.
9 We do not use personal pronouns together with relative pronouns. (See 277.1.)

That's the girl who lives in the flat upstairs.

(Not that's the girl who she lives . . . )

Here's the money that you lent me.

(Not Here's the money that you lent it me.)

For the use of they, them and their to refer to somebody, anybody etc, see 307.
For the use of he and she to refer to animals etc, see 141.
For the 'indefinite' personal pronoun one, see 229.

248 play and game

A play is a piece of literature written for the theatre or television.

Julius Caesar is one of Shakespeare's early plays.

A game is, for example, chess, football, or bridge.

Chess is a very slow game. (NOT . . . a very slow play.)

Verbs: people act in plays or films, and play games.

My daughter is acting in her school play.

Have you ever played rugby football?

249 please and thank you

1 We use please to make a request more polite.

Could I have some more, please?

'Would you like some wine?' 'Yes, please.'

Note that please does not change an order into a request.

Stand over there. (order) Please stand over there. (polite order)

For details of how to make requests, see 286.

2 We do not use please to ask people what they said. (See 121.)

'I've got a bit of a headache.' 'I beg your pardon?' (NOT . . . 'Please?')

We do not use please when we give things to people.

'Have you got a light?' 'Yes, here you are.' (NOT . . . 'Please—')

We do not use please as an answer to Thank you. (See 4 below.)

'Thanks a lot.' 'That's OK.' (NOT . . . 'Please—')

3 Thanks is more informal than thank you. We use them as follows:

Thank you (NOT Thanks you.)

Thank you very much Thanks very much Thanks a lot.

We can use an -ing form after thank you/thanks.

'Thank you for coming.' 'Not at all. Thank you for having me.'
We often use Thank you to accept things (like Yes please).

'Would you like some potatoes?' 'Thank you.' 'How many?'

To make it clear that you are refusing something, say No thank you.

Note the expression Thank God.

Thank God it's Friday! (NOT -Thanks God . . .)

We do not automatically answer when people say Thank you. If we want to answer, we can say Not at all, You're welcome (especially in American English), That's all right or That's OK (informal). Compare:

'Here's your coat.' 'Thanks.' (No answer.)
'Thanks so much for looking after the children.' 'That's all right. Any time.'

250 possessive 's: forms

1 Spelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular noun + 's</th>
<th>my father's car</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>plural noun + 's</td>
<td>my parents' house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irregular plural + 's</td>
<td>the children's room</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We sometimes just add an apostrophe (') to a singular noun ending in -s: Socrates' ideas. But 's is more common: Charles's wife.

We can add 's to a whole phrase: the man next door's wife.

2 Pronunciation

The ending 's is pronounced just like a plural ending (see 302). The apostrophe (') in a form like parents' does not change the pronunciation at all.

3 Possessives are not usually used together with other determiners.

The car that is John's is John's car, not the John's car.

Have you met Jack's new girl-friend?
(Not . . . the Jack's new girl-friend?)

For the structure a friend of John's etc, see 252.

4 We can use the possessive without a following noun.

'Whose is that?' 'Peter's.'

We often talk about shops and people's houses in this way.

Alice is at the hairdresser's.

We had a nice time at John and Susan's last night.

For the meanings and use of the possessive, see 251.
possessive 's: use

1 Meanings

We can use the possessive 's to talk about several different sorts of ideas. The meaning is often similar to the meaning of have.

That's my father's house. (My father has that house.)
Mary's brother is a lawyer. (Mary has a brother who is a lawyer.)
the plan's importance (the importance that the plan has)

Other meanings are possible.
I didn't believe the girl's story. (The girl told a story.)
Have you read John's letter? (John wrote a letter.)
the government's decision (The government made a decision.)
the train's arrival (The train arrived.)

2 's and of

We use the possessive structure (A's B) most often when the first noun (A) is the name of something living. In other cases, we often use a structure with of (the B of A). Compare:

my father's house (NOT the house of my father)
the plan's importance (NOT the importance of the plan)

3 Time expressions

We often use the possessive to refer to particular times, days, weeks etc.

this evening's performance
last Sunday's paper
next week's TV programmes
this year's profits

But we do not use the possessive when the expression of time has a 'general' meaning.

the nine o'clock news
(NOT the nine o'clock's news)
a Sunday newspaper
(NOT a Sunday's newspaper)

We also use the possessive in 'measuring' expressions of time which begin with a number.

ten minutes' walk  two weeks' holiday

4 noun + noun

We can also put two nouns together in the structure noun + noun
(for example a table leg; a Sunday newspaper). For details of this structure, see 226.

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possessives with determiners (a friend of mine, etc)

We cannot put a possessive together with another determiner before a noun. We can say my friend, Ann's friend, a friend or that friend, but not a my friend or that Ann's friend.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>determiner + noun + of + possessive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That policeman is a friend of mine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here's that friend of yours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I met another boyfriend of Lucy's yesterday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He's a cousin of the Queen's.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you heard this new idea of the boss's?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

possessives: my and mine, etc

1 My, your, his, her, its, one's, our and their are determiners (see 96). In grammars and dictionaries they are often called 'possessive adjectives'.

That's my watch.

We cannot use my, your etc together with other determiners (for example a, the, this). You cannot say a my friend or the my car or this my house. (For the structure a friend of mine, see 252.)

Don't confuse its (possessive) and it's (= it is/has).

'We've got a new cat.' 'What's its name?' 'It's called Polly.'

2 Mine, yours, his, hers, ours and theirs are pronouns.

That watch is mine. Which car is yours?

We do not use articles with mine etc.

Can I borrow your keys? I can't find mine.

(NOT I can't find the mine.)

3 We can use whose as a determiner (like my) or as a pronoun (like mine).

Whose bag is that? Whose is that bag?

4 After a plural possessive, we do not usually use a singular word to express a plural meaning.

The teacher told the children to open their books.

(NOT . . . to open their book. . . )
prepositions after particular words and expressions

(This is a list of expressions which often cause problems. For the use of of with determiners, see 96.)

ability at (NOT in)
She shows great ability at mathematics.

afraid of (NOT by)
Are you afraid of spiders?

agree with a person
I entirely agree with you.

agree about a subject of discussion
We agree about most things.

agree on a matter for decision
Let's try to agree on a date.

agree to a suggestion
I'll agree to your suggestion if you lower the price.

angry with (sometimes at) a person for doing something
I'm angry with her for not telling me.

angry about (sometimes at) something
What are you so angry about?

apologize for
I must apologize for disturbing you.

arrive at or in (NOT to)
What time do we arrive at Cardiff?
When did you arrive in England?

ask: see 53

bad at (NOT in)
I'm not bad at tennis.

believe in God, Father Christmas etc (= believe that... exists)
I half believe in life after death.

believe a person or something that is said (= accept as true)
Don't believe her. I don't believe a word she says.

blue with cold, red with anger
My hands were blue with cold when I got home.

borrow: see 67

call after
We called him Thomas, after his grandfather.

clever at (NOT in)
I'm not very clever at cooking.

congratulate/congratulations on (NOT for)
I must congratulate you on your exam results.
Congratulations on your new job!
crash into (NOT against)
  I wasn't looking where I was going, and crashed into the car in front.

depend/dependent on (NOT from or of)
  We may play football — it depends on the weather.
  He doesn't want to be dependent on his parents.
But: independent of

different from (sometimes to; American from or than)
  You're very different from your brother.

difficulty with something, (in) doing something
  (NOT difficulties to . . .)
  I'm having difficulty with my travel arrangements.
  You won't have much difficulty (in) getting to know people in Italy.

disappointed with somebody
  My father never showed it if he was disappointed with me.

disappointed with/at/about something
  You must be pretty disappointed with/at/about your exam results.

a discussion about something
  We had a long discussion about politics.

to discuss something (no preposition)
  We'd better discuss your travel plans.

divide into (NOT in)
  The book is divided into three parts.

dream of ( = think of, imagine)
  I often dreamed of being famous when I was younger.

dream about
  What does it mean if you dream about mountains?

dress in (NOT with)
  Who's the woman dressed in green?

drive into
  Granny drove into a tree again yesterday.

example of (NOT for)
  Sherry is an example of a fortified wine.

explain something to somebody (NOT explain something to somebody)
  Could you explain this rule to me?

get in(to) and out of a car, taxi or small boat
  When I got into my car, I found the radio had been stolen.

get on(to) and off a bus, train, plane or ship
  We'll be getting off the train in ten minutes.

good at (NOT in)
  Are you any good at tennis?

the idea of . . . -ing (NOT the idea to . . .)
  I don't like the idea of getting married yet.
ill with
   The boss has been ill with flu this week.

impressed with/by
   I'm very impressed with/by your work.

independent of; independence of/from
   She got a job so that she could be independent of her parents.
   When did India get her independence from Britain?

insist on (NOT to . . .)
   George's father insisted on paying.

interest/interested in (NOT for)
   When did your interest in social work begin?
   Not many people are interested in grammar.

kind to (NOT with)
   People have always been very kind to me.

laugh at
   I hate being laughed at.

listen to
   If you don't listen to people, they won't listen to you.

look at ( = 'point one's eyes at')
   Stop looking at me like that.

look after ( = take care of)
   Thanks for looking after me when I was ill.

look for ( = try to find)
   Can you help me look for my keys?

marriage to; get married to (NOT with)
   Her marriage to Philip didn't last very long.
   How long have you been married to Sheila?
	nice to (NOT with)
   You weren't very nice to me last night.

pay for something (NOT pay something)
   Excuse me, sir. You haven't paid for your drink.

pleased with somebody
   The boss is very pleased with you.

pleased with/about/at something
   I wasn't very pleased with/about/at my exam results.

polite to (NOT with)
   Try to be polite to Uncle Richard for once.

prevent . . . from . . .-ing (NOT to . . .)
   The noise of your party prevented me from sleeping

proof of (NOT for)
   I want proof of your love. Lend me some money.
reason for (NOT of)
Nobody knows the reason for the accident.

remind of
She reminds me of a girl I was at school with.

responsible/responsibility for
Who's responsible for the shopping this week?

rude to (NOT with)
Peggy was pretty rude to my family last weekend.

run into (= meet)
I ran into Philip at Victoria Station this morning.

search for (= look for)
The customs were searching for drugs at the airport.
search without preposition (= look through; look everywhere in/on)
They searched everybody's luggage.
They searched the man in front of me from head to foot.

shocked by/at
I was terribly shocked by the news of Peter's accident.

shout at (aggressive)
If you don't stop shouting at me I'll come and hit you.
shout to = call to
Mary shouted to us to come in and swim.

smile at
If you smile at me like that I'll give you anything you want.

sorry about something that has happened
I'm sorry about your exam results.
sorry for/about something that one has done
I'm sorry for/about breaking your window.
sorry for a person
I feel really sorry for her children.

suffer from
My wife is suffering from hepatitis.

surprised at/by
Everybody was surprised at/by the weather.

take part in (NOT at)
I don't want to take part in any more conferences.

think of/about (NOT USUALLY think to . . .)
I'm thinking of studying medicine.
I've also thought about studying dentistry.

the thought of . . . (NOT the thought to . . .)
I hate the thought of going back to work.

throw . . . at (aggressive)
Stop throwing stones at the cars.
throw . . . to (in a game etc)
   If you get the ball, throw it to me.
typical of (NOT for)
   The wine's typical of the region.
write: see 356.6
wrong with
   What's wrong with Rachel today?

255 prepositions before particular words and expressions

(This is a list of a few expressions which often cause problems. For information about other preposition + noun combinations, see a good dictionary.)

at the cinema; at the theatre; at a party; at university
a book by Joyce; a concerto by Mozart; a film by Fassbinder (NOT of)
for . . . reason
   My sister decided to go to America for several reasons.
in pen, pencil, ink etc
   Please fill in the form in ink.
in the rain, snow etc
   I like walking in the rain.
in a . . . voice
   Stop talking to me in that stupid voice.
in a suit, raincoat, shirt, skirt, hat etc
   Who's the man in the funny hat over there?
in the end = finally, after a long time
   In the end, I got a visa for the Soviet Union.
at the end = at the point where something stops
   I think the film's a bit weak at the end.
in time = with enough time to spare; not late
   I didn't get an interview because I didn't send in the form in time.
on time = at exactly the right time
   Concerts never start on time.
on the radio; on TV

256 prepositions: expressions without prepositions

(This is a list of important expressions in which we do not use prepositions, or can leave them out.)

1 We do not use prepositions after discuss, marry and lack.

   We must discuss your plans. She married a friend of her sister's.
   He's clever, but he lacks experience.
No preposition before expressions of time beginning next, last, this, one, every, each, some, any, all.

See you next Monday. The meeting's this Thursday.
Come any day you like. The party lasted all night.

Note also tomorrow morning, yesterday afternoon, etc.
(NOT on tomorrow morning etc)

In an informal style, we sometimes leave out on before the names of the days of the week. This is very common in American English.

Why don't you come round (on) Monday evening?

We use a instead of a preposition in three times a day, sixty miles an hour, eighty pence a pound, and similar expressions.

We usually leave out at in (At) what time . . . ?
What time does Granny's train arrive?

Expressions containing words like height, length, size, shape, age, colour, volume, area are usually connected to the subject of the sentence by the verb be, without a preposition.

What colour are her eyes?
He's just the right height to be a policeman.
She's the same age as me.
You're a very nice shape.
I'm the same weight as I was twenty years ago.

What shoe size are you?

We often leave out in (especially in spoken English) in the expressions (in) the same way, (in) this way, (in) another way etc.

They plant corn the same way their ancestors used to, 500 years ago.

We do not use to before home.

I'm going home.

In American English, at can be left out before home.

Is anybody home?

Prepositions at the end of clauses

Prepositions often come at the ends of clauses in English. This happens in several kinds of structure:

a questions beginning what, who, where etc.

What are you looking at?
Who did you go with?
Where did you buy it from?
b relative clauses

There's the house (that) I told you about.
You remember the boy I was going out with?

c passive structures

I hate being laughed at.
They took him to hospital yesterday and he's already been operated on.

d infinitive structures

It's a boring place to live in.
I need something to write with.

2 In a more formal style, we can put a preposition before a question-word or a relative pronoun.

To whom is that letter addressed?
She met a man with whom she had been friendly years before.
On which flight is the general travelling?

258 prepositions and adverb particles

Words like down, in are not always prepositions. Compare:

I ran down the road. He's in his office.
Please sit down. You can go in.

In the expressions down the road and in his office, down and in are prepositions: they have objects (the road, his office).
In Please sit down and You can go in, down and in have no objects.
They are not prepositions, but adverbs of place, which modify the verbs sit and go.
Small adverbs like this are usually called 'adverb particles' or 'adverbial particles'. They include in, out, up, down, on, off, through, past, away, back, across, over, under. Adverb particles often join together with verbs to make two-word verbs, sometimes with completely new meanings. Examples: break down = 'stop working'; put off = 'delay'; postpone; work out = 'calculate'; give up = 'stop trying'. For information about these verbs, see the next section.

259 prepositional verbs and phrasal verbs

Many English verbs have two parts: a 'base' verb like bring, come, sit, break and another small word like in, down, up.

Could you bring in the coffee?
Come in and sit down.
He broke up a piece of bread and threw the bits to the birds.

The second part of the verb is sometimes a preposition, and sometimes
an adverb particle (see 258). When these verbs are used with objects, the sentence structure is not the same for the two kinds of verb.

**Prepositional verbs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb + preposition + noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She ran down the road.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He sat on the table.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Phrasal verbs**

(verbs with adverb particles)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb + particle + noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She threw down the paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He threw the paper down.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb + noun + particle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She threw the paper down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He put on his coat on.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb + pronoun + particle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She threw it down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He put it on.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For detailed information about phrasal and prepositional verbs, see the *Oxford Dictionary of Current Idiomatic English, Volume 1*, or the *Longman Dictionary of English Idioms*.

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260 present tenses: introduction

‘Present tenses’ are used to talk about several different kinds of time.

1 **Now**, at this exact moment

![Diagram](https://www.IELTS4U.blogfa.com)

![Diagram](https://www.IELTS4U.blogfa.com)

2 **Around now**

‘What are you doing?’ *I’m reading.*

*I’m going* to a lot of parties these days.
3 'General time' — at any time, all the time, not just around now

I go to London about three times a week.
My parents live near Dover.
Water freezes at 0° Centigrade.

When we talk about time 'around now', we usually use the 'present progressive tense' (for example, I'm going, I'm reading). In other cases, we usually use the 'simple present' tense (for example I go, I read). For details, see the next two sections.

We use a present perfect tense, not a present tense, to say how long something has been going on.

I've known her since 1960. (NOT I know her . . .)
I've been learning English for three years. (NOT I'm learning . . .)
For details, see 243 and 244.

261 present tenses: simple present

1 Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I work</td>
<td>do I work?</td>
<td>I do not work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you work</td>
<td>do you work?</td>
<td>you do not work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it works</td>
<td>does he/she/it work?</td>
<td>he/she/it does not work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we work</td>
<td>do we work?</td>
<td>we do not work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they work</td>
<td>do they work?</td>
<td>they do not work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbs ending in s, -z, -x, -ch, and -sh have -es in the third person singular (for example misses, buzzes, fixes, watches, pushes).

Other verbs have -s. Exceptions: goes, does.

Verbs ending in consonant + y have -ies in the third person singular (for example hurries, worries).

The pronunciation of -(e)s in the third person follows exactly the same rules as the pronunciation of plural -(e)s. See 302 for details.
2 ‘General time’

We can use the simple present to talk about actions and situations in ‘general time’ — things which happen at any time, or repeatedly, or all the time.

I go to London about three times a week.
My parents live near Dover.
Water freezes at 0° Centigrade.

3 ‘Momentary’ actions

We can also use the simple present to talk about ‘momentary’ present actions — things which take a very short time to happen. This tense is often used in sports commentaries.

Lydiard passes to Taylor, Taylor to Morrison, Morrison back to Taylor ... and Taylor shoots — and it’s a goal!!

4 Actions ‘around now’ (present progressive)

We do not usually use the simple present to talk about longer actions and situations which are going on around now. In this case, we prefer the present progressive. (See 262.)

‘What are you doing?’ I’m reading. (NOT ... I read.)

There are a few exceptions: verbs which are not used in progressive forms (see 225).

I like this wine. (NOT I’m liking this wine.)

5 Future

We can use the simple present to talk about the future. We do this:

a. after conjunctions: (see 343):

I’ll phone you when I come back.
She won’t come if you don’t ask her.
I’ll always love you whatever you do.

b. when we talk about programmes and timetables.

The train arrives at 7.46. I start work tomorrow.

In other cases, we do not use the simple present to talk about the future. We prefer the present progressive (see 262).

Are you going out tonight?
(NOT Do you go out tonight?)
262 present tenses: present progressive

1 Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am working</td>
<td>am I working?</td>
<td>I am not working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you are working</td>
<td>are you working?</td>
<td>you are not working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he/she/it is working</td>
<td>is he/she/it working?</td>
<td>he/she/it is not working, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc</td>
<td>etc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 'Around now'

We use the present progressive to talk about actions and situations that are going on 'around now': before, during and after the moment of speaking.

Hurry up! We're all waiting for you! (NOT We all wait . . .)

What are you doing? I'm reading.

I'm going to a lot of parties these days.

3 Changes

We also use the present progressive to talk about developing and changing situations.

The weather's getting warmer.

That child's getting bigger every day.
4 Present progressive and simple present

We do not use the present progressive to talk about 'general time'. For this, we use the simple present. (See 261.) Compare:

My sister's living at home for the moment. (around now)
You live in North London, don't you? (general time)

Why is that girl standing on the table?
Chetford Castle stands on a hill outside the town.
The leaves are going brown.
I go to the mountains about twice a year.

5 We often use the present progressive to talk about the future. (For details, see 135.)

What are you doing tomorrow evening?

6 Some verbs are not used in progressive forms. (See 225.)

I like this wine. (NOT I'm liking . . .)

7 Verbs that refer to physical feelings (for example feel, hurt, ache) can be used in the simple present or present progressive without much difference of meaning.

How do you feel? OR How are you feeling?
My head aches. OR My head is aching.

8 For the use of always with progressive forms (for example She's always losing her keys), see 263.

263 progressive tenses with always

We can use always with a progressive tense to mean 'very often'.

I'm always losing my keys.
Granny's nice. She's always giving people things and doing things for people.
I'm always running into ( = 'accidentally meeting') Paul these days.

We use this structure to talk about things which happen very often (perhaps more often than expected), but which are not planned.

Compare:

When Alice comes to see me, I always meet her at the station. (a regular, planned arrangement)
I'm always meeting Mrs Bailiff in the supermarket. (accidental, unplanned meetings)

When I was a child, we always had picnics on Saturdays in the summer. (regular, planned)
Her mother was always arranging little surprise picnics and outings. (unexpected, not regular)
264 punctuation: apostrophe

We use apostrophes (') in two important ways.

a. To show where we have left letters out of a contracted form. (See 90.)
   can’t ( = cannot)    she’s ( = she is)    I’d ( = I would)

b. In possessive forms of nouns. (See 250.)
   the girl’s father    Charles’s wife    three miles’ walk

We do not use apostrophes in plurals, possessive determiners (except one’s) or possessive pronouns.
   blue jeans (NOT blue jean’s)
   The dog wagged its tail. (NOT . . . it’s tail)
   This is yours. (NOT . . . your’s)

265 punctuation: colon

1 We often use colons (:) before explanations.
   We decided not to go on holiday: we had too little money.
   Mother may have to go into hospital: she’s got kidney trouble.

2 We also use colons before quotations.
   In the words of Murphy’s Law: ‘Anything that can go wrong will go wrong’.

266 punctuation: comma

Some ways of using commas:

1 We use commas (,) to separate things in a series or list. We do not use them between the last two words or expressions (except when these are long).
   I went to Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Austria and Germany.
   You had a holiday at Christmas, at New Year and at Easter.
   I spent yesterday playing cricket, listening to jazz records, and talking about the meaning of life.

   We separate adjectives by commas after a noun, but not always before.
   Compare:
   a tall(,) dark(,) handsome cowboy
   The cowboy was tall, dark and handsome.

   We put commas in a series of colour adjectives.
   a green, red and gold carpet
If we put adverbs in unusual places in a clause, we often put commas before and after them.

My father, however, did not agree.
Jane had, surprisingly, paid for everything.
We were, believe it or not, in love with each other.

In sentences that begin with conjunctions, we usually put a comma after the first clause.

If you’re ever in London, come and see me.
As soon as we stop, get out of the car.

We do not put commas before ‘reported speech’ clauses.

Everybody realized that I was a foreigner.
I didn’t know where I should go.
Fred wondered if lunch was ready.

We do not usually use commas between grammatically separate sentences (in places where a full stop would be possible).

The blue dress was warmer. On the other hand, the purple one was prettier.
(OR The blue dress was warmer; on the other hand . . .)

We do not use commas in decimals.

3.5 = three point five or three and a half

For the use of commas in relative clauses, see 280

punctuation: dash

We often use a dash (—) in informal writing. A dash can come before an afterthought.

We’ll be arriving on Monday morning — at least, I think so.

Dashes are common in personal letters instead of colons or semicolons, or instead of brackets.

There are three things I can never remember — names, faces, and I’ve forgotten the other.

We had a great time in Greece — the kids really loved it.

My mother — who rarely gets angry — really lost her temper.
268 punctuation: quotation marks

Quotation marks (" . . . " “ . . . ”) can also be called 'inverted commas'.

1 We can use quotation marks when we say what name something has.
   " . . . can be called 'inverted commas'.
And quotation marks are often used when we mention titles.
   His next book was 'Heart of Darkness'.

2 We can use quotation marks when we mention a word, or when we use it in an unusual way.
   The word 'disinterested' does not mean 'uninterested'.
   A textbook can be a 'wall' between a teacher and a class.

3 We use quotation marks (single ' . . . ' or double " . . . ") when we quote direct speech.
   'Hello,' she said. OR "Hello," she said.

269 punctuation: semi-colons and full stops

We can use semi-colons (;) or full stops (.) between grammatically separate sentences.

   Some people like Picasso. Others dislike him.
   Some people like Picasso; others dislike him.
We often prefer semi-colons when the ideas are very closely connected.
   It is a good idea; whether it will work or not is another question.

270 questions: basic rules

(Some spoken questions do not follow these rules. See 271.)

1 Put an auxiliary verb before the subject.

   auxiliary verb + subject + main verb

   Have you received my letter of June 17?
   (NOT You have received . . . .)
   Why are you laughing?
   (NOT Why you are laughing?)
   How much does the room cost?
   (NOT How much the room costs?)

2 If there is no other auxiliary verb, use do or did.

   do + subject + main verb

   Do you like Mozart?
   (NOT Like you Mozart?)
   What does 'periphrastic' mean?
   (NOT What means . . . ?)
   Did you like the concert?
3. Do not use *do* together with another auxiliary verb, or with *be*.
   - *Can you* tell me the time? (NOT *Do you can* tell me . . . ?)
   - *Have you* seen John? (NOT *Do you have* seen John?)
   - *Are you* ready?

4. After *do*, use the infinitive without *to*.
   - *Did you* go camping last weekend? (NOT *Did you went* . . . ?  NOT *Did you to go* . . . ?)

5. Put only the auxiliary verb before the subject.
   - *Is your mother* coming tomorrow? (NOT *Is coming your mother* . . . ?)
   - *When* was your reservation made? (NOT *When was made* your reservation?)

6. When *who, which, what or how many* is the subject of a sentence, do not use *do*.
   - *Who left* the door open? (NOT *Who did leave* the door open?)
   - *Which costs* more — the blue one or the grey one? (NOT *Which does cost* more . . . ?)
   - *What happened?* (NOT *What did happen?*)
   - *How many people work* in your office? (NOT *How many people do work* . . . ?)  
     When *who, which, what or how many* is the object, use *do*.
   - *Who do* you want to speak to?
   - *What do* you think?

7. In reported questions, do not put the verb before the subject (see 284). Do not use a question mark.
   - *Tell me when you are going* on holiday. (NOT *Tell me when are you going* . . . ?)

### 271 questions: word order in spoken questions

In spoken questions, we do not always use 'interrogative' word order. *You're* working late tonight?

We ask questions in this way:

a. when we think we know something, but we want to make sure
   - *That's the boss?* (= I suppose that's the boss, isn't it?)

b. to express surprise
   - *THAT's the boss? I thought he was the cleaner.*

This order is not possible after a question-word (*what, how* etc).
   - *Where are you going?* (NOT *Where you are going?*)
272 questions: reply questions

1 We often answer people with short 'questions'. Their structure is

auxiliary verb + personal pronoun

'It was a terrible party. 'Was it? 'Yes, . . .'

These 'reply questions' do not ask for information. They just show that we are listening and interested. More examples:

'We had a lovely holiday. 'Did you? 'Yes, We went . . .'
'I've got a headache. 'Have you, dear? I'll get you an aspirin.'
'John likes that girl next door. 'Oh, does he?'
'I don't understand. 'Don't you? I'm sorry.'

We can answer an affirmative sentence with a negative reply question. This is like a negative-question exclamation (see 120.3) — it expresses emphatic agreement.

'It was a lovely concert. 'Yes, wasn't it? I did enjoy it.'
'She's put on a lot a weight. 'Yes, hasn't she?'

Question tags have a similar structure. See 273.
See also 293 (short answers).

273 question tags

We often put small questions at the ends of sentences in speech.

That's the postman, isn't it? You take sugar in tea, don't you?
Not a very good film, was it?

We use these 'question tags' to ask if something is true, or to ask somebody to agree with us.

1 Structure

We do not put question tags after questions.

You're the new secretary, aren't you?
(Not: Are you the new secretary, aren't you?)

We put negative tags after affirmative sentences, and non-negative tags after negative sentences.

+ -
It's cold, isn't it?

- +
It's not warm, is it?

If the main sentence has an auxiliary verb (or be), the question tag has the same auxiliary verb (or be).

Sally can speak French, can't she?
You haven't seen my keys, have you?
The meeting's at ten, isn't it?
If the main sentence has no auxiliary verb, the question tag has do.

You like oysters, don't you?

Harry gave you a cheque, didn't he?

2 Meaning and intonation

We show the meaning of a question tag by the intonation. If the tag is a real question — if we really want to know something, and are not sure of the answer — we use a rising intonation: the voice goes up.

The meeting's at four o'clock, isn't it?

If the tag is not a real question — if we are sure of the answer — we use a falling intonation: the voice goes down.

It's a beautiful day, isn't it?

3 Requests

We often ask for help or information by using the structure

negative sentence + question tag

You couldn't lend me a pound, could you?

You haven't seen my watch anywhere, have you?

4 Note

a The question tag for I am is aren't I?

I'm late, aren't I?

b After imperatives, we use won't you? (to invite people to do things) and will you? would you? can you? can't you? and could you? (to tell people to do things).

Do sit down, won't you? Open a window, would you?

Give me a hand, will you? Shut up, can't you?

After a negative imperative, we use will you?

Don't forget, will you?

After Let's . . . , we use shall we?

Let's have a party, shall we?

c There can be a subject in question tags.

There's something wrong, isn't there?

There weren't any problems, were there?

d We use it in question tags to refer to nothing, and they to refer to nobody.

Nothing can happen, can it? Nobody phoned, did they?

We also use they to refer to somebody, everybody (see 307).

Somebody wanted a drink, didn't they? Who was it?
274 quite

1 Quite has two meanings. Compare:

   It's quite good. It's quite impossible.

Good is a 'gradable' adjective: things can be more or less good. Impossible is not 'gradable'. Things cannot be more or less impossible; they are impossible or they are not.

With gradable adjectives, quite means something like 'fairly' or 'rather'. (See 124.)

   'How's your steak?' 'Quite nice.'
   She's quite pretty. She'd look better if she dressed differently, though.

With non-gradable adjectives, quite means 'completely'.

   His French is quite perfect. The bird was quite dead.

2 We put quite before a/an.

   quite a nice day quite an interesting film

3 We can use quite with verbs.

   I quite like her. Have you quite finished?

275 real(ly)

In informal English (especially American English), real is often used as an adverb instead of really before adverbs and adjectives.

   That was real nice. She cooks real well.

Some people consider this 'incorrect'.

276 reflexive pronouns

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

1 We use reflexive pronouns to talk about actions where the subject and the object are the same person.

   I cut myself shaving this morning. (NOT I cut me . . . )
   We got out of the river and dried ourselves. (NOT . . . dried us . . . )
   Why's she talking to herself?

We do not usually use reflexive pronouns with wash, dress or shave.

   Do you shave on Sundays? (NOT . . . shave yourself . . .)

After prepositions, we use personal pronouns instead of reflexives when it is clear which person we are talking about.

   She took her dog with her. (NOT . . . with herself.)
2. We can use reflexive pronouns to mean 'that person/thing and nobody/nothing else'.
   
   *It's quicker if you do it* yourself.
   *The manager spoke to me* himself.
   *The house itself is nice, but the garden's very small.*

3. *By myself, by yourself* etc has two meanings.
   
a. 'alone'
   *I often like to spend time* by myself.
   
b. 'without help'
   *'Can I help you?' 'No, thanks. I can do it* by myself.*'

4. Don't confuse *-selves* and *each other* (see 105).

---

277. *relative pronouns*

1. Relative pronouns are *who, whom, whose, which, that* and *what*. Relative pronouns do two things:
   
a. they join clauses together, like conjunctions
   
b. they are the subjects or objects of clauses (except *whose*).
   
   Compare:

   *What's the name of the tall man? He just came in.*
   *What's the name of the tall man who just came in?*  
   *(Who joins the two clauses together. It is the subject of the second clause: we use *who* in the same way as *he*.)

   *This is Ms Rogers. You met her last year.*
   *This is Ms Rogers. whom you met last year.*  
   *(Whom joins the two clauses together. It is the object of the second clause: we use *whom* in the same way as *her*.)
I've got a book. It might interest you.
I've got a book which might interest you.
(Which joins the two clauses together. It is the subject of the second clause: we use which in the same way as it.)

I've found the paper. You were looking for it.
I've found the paper which you were looking for.
(Which is the object of the second clause.)

One subject or object is enough.
Here's the book which you asked for.
(We use who/whom for people and which for things.)

She's a person who can do anything. (NOT ... a person which ...)
It's a machine which can do anything. (NOT ... a machine who ...)

2 We often use that instead of which in 'identifying' relative clauses (see 280).

I've got a book that might interest you.
Have you got a map that shows all the motorways?
In an informal style, we also use that instead of who(m).

There's the woman that works in the photographer's.
You remember the boy that I was talking about?

3 In 'identifying' relative clauses (see 280), we often leave out object pronouns.

You remember the boy (that) I was talking about?
I've found the paper (that) you were looking for.

4 We can use when and where in a similar way to relative pronouns.

Can you tell me a time when you'll be free?
(= a time at which ...)
I know a place where you can find wild strawberries.

5 Do not use what instead of that or which.

Everything that happened was my fault. (NOT ... what happened ...)
She got married again, which surprised everybody.
(= what surprised everybody)

6 Some relative clauses 'identify' nouns — they tell us which person or thing is meant.

What's the name of the tall man who just came in?
Other relative clauses tell us more about a noun which is already identified.

This is Ms Rogers, whom you've met last year.
The grammar is not quite the same in the two kinds of clause. We use that in identifying clauses, and we can leave out object pronouns. But in non-identifying clauses, we cannot use that, and we cannot leave out object pronouns. For details, see 280.

For whose, see 279. For what, see 278.

278  relative pronouns: what

1  What is different from other relative pronouns. Other relative pronouns usually refer to a noun that comes before.

I gave her the money that she needed.

The thing that I'd like most is a home computer. (That refers to — repeats the meaning of — the money and the thing.)

We use what as noun + relative pronoun together.

I gave her what she needed. (What = the money that.)

What I'd like most is a home computer. (What = the thing that.)

2  Do not use what with the same meaning as that.

You can have everything (that) you like. (NOT ... everything you like.)

The only thing that makes me feel better is coffee. (NOT The only thing what . . . )

We use which, not what, to refer to a whole sentence that comes before.

Sally married George, which made Paul very unhappy. (NOT ... what made Paul very unhappy.)

279  relative pronouns: whose

Whose is a possessive relative word. It does two things:

a. it joins clauses together

b. it is a 'determiner' (see 96), like his, her, its or their. Compare:

I saw a girl. Her hair came down to her waist.
I saw a girl whose hair came down to her waist.

This is Felicity. You met her sister last week.
This is Felicity, whose sister you met last week.

Our friends the Robbins — we spent the summer at their farmhouse — are moving to Scotland.
Our friends the Robbins, at whose farmhouse we spent the summer, are moving to Scotland.

For the interrogative pronoun whose, see 253.3.
relatives: identifying and non-identifying clauses

1 Some relative clauses ‘identify’ nouns. They tell us which person or thing is meant.

What’s the name of the tall man who just came in?
(who just came in tells the hearer which tall man is meant: it identifies the man.)
Whose is the car that’s parked outside?
(that’s parked outside tells the hearer which car is meant: it identifies the car.)

Other relative clauses do not identify. They tell us more about a person or thing that is already identified.

This is Ms Rogers, whom you met last year.
(whom you met last year does not tell us which woman is meant: we already know that it is Ms Rogers.)
Have you seen my new car, which I bought last week?
(which I bought last week does not tell us which car is meant: we already know that it is ‘my new car’.)

2 Non-identifying clauses are separated from the rest of the sentence by commas (,). Identifying clauses do not have commas. Compare:

The woman who does my hair has moved to another hairdresser’s.
Dorothy, who does my hair, has moved to another hairdresser’s.

3 We only use that in identifying clauses. And we can only leave out the object in identifying clauses. Compare:

The whisky (that) you drank last night cost £15 a bottle.
I gave him a large glass of whisky, which he drank at once.
(NOT . . . whisky, that he drank . . .) (NOT . . . whisky, he drank . . .)

4 Whom is unusual in identifying clauses. Compare:

The man (that) my daughter wants to marry has been divorced twice.
Max Harrison, whom my daughter wants to marry, has been divorced twice.

5 Non-identifying clauses are unusual in an informal style.

remind

1 You remind somebody to do something that he might forget.
We do not use remember with this meaning.

remind + object + infinitive

Please remind me to post these letters.
(NOT Please remember me . . .)
I reminded her to send her sister a birthday card.
2 We use *remind* . . . of to say that something makes us remember the past.

   **remind + object + of . . .**

   The smell of hay always *reminds me of* our old house in the country. 
   She *reminds me of* her mother. (= She looks like her mother, or she 
   behaves like her mother.)

282 reported speech and direct speech

1 There are two ways of telling a person what somebody else said.

a. direct speech

   *SUE*: What did Bill say?
   *PETER*: He said *I want to go home*.

b. reported speech

   *SUE*: What did Bill say?
   *PETER*: He said *that he wanted to go home*.

When we use 'direct speech', we give the exact words (more or less) 
that were said. When we use 'reported speech', we change the words 
that were said to make them fit into our own sentence. (For example, 
when Peter is talking about Bill he says *he wanted*, not *I want.*) For 
details, see 283.

2 We use a conjunction to join a reported speech clause to the rest of the 
sentence.

a. reported statements: *that*

   He said *that* he wanted to go home. 
   In an informal style we can leave out *that*.

   He said he wanted to go home.

b. reported questions: *if, whether, what, where, how*, etc

   She asked me *if* I wanted anything to drink. 
   She asked me *what* my name was.

When we report orders, requests, advice etc, we usually use an infinitive 
structure.

   *Who told you to put* the lights off? 
   I advised Lucy *to go* to the police.

For more details of these structures, see 284; 285.

3 'Reported speech' is not only used to report what people say. We use 
the same structure to report people's thoughts, beliefs, knowledge etc.

   I thought *something was wrong*.
   She knew *what I wanted*.
   Ann wondered *if Mr Blackstone really understood her*.
283 reported speech: pronouns; ‘here and now’ words; tenses

BILL (on Saturday evening): I don't like this party. I want to go home.
PETER (on Sunday morning): Bill said he didn't like the party, and he wanted to go home.

1 Pronouns

In reported speech, we use the same pronouns to talk about people that we use in other structures.

Bill said he didn't like the party.
(NOT Bill said I didn't like the party.)

2 ‘Here and now’ words

When somebody is speaking, he or she uses words like this, here, now to talk about the place where he or she is speaking, and the time when the words are said.

If we report the words in a different place at a different time, we will not use this, here, now etc.

Bill said he didn't like the party.
(NOT Bill said he didn't like this party.)

3 Tenses

When we report things that people said in the past, we do not usually use the same tenses as they used. (This is because the times are different.)

Bill said he didn't like the party.
(NOT Bill said he doesn't like the party.)

Compare:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original words</th>
<th>Reported speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will you marry me?</td>
<td>I asked him if he would marry me. (NOT ... if he will marry me.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You look nice.</td>
<td>I told her she looked nice. (NOT ... she looks nice.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm learning French.</td>
<td>She said she was learning French. (NOT ... she is learning ...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've forgotten.</td>
<td>He said he had forgotten. (NOT ... he has forgotten.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John phoned.</td>
<td>She told me that John had phoned. (NOT ... that John phoned.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 Exceptions
If somebody said something in the past that is still true, we sometimes report it with the same tense as the original speaker.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original words</th>
<th>Reported speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The earth goes round the sun.</td>
<td>He proved that the earth goes/went round the sun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How old are you?</td>
<td>I asked how old you are/were.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For must in reported speech, see 207.3.

284 reported speech: questions

1 In reported questions, the subject comes before the verb.

He asked where I was going.
(NOT ... where was I going.)
I asked where the President and his wife were staying.
(NOT ... where were ...)

Auxiliary do is not used.

I wondered how they felt. (NOT ... how did they feel.)
Question marks are not used.

We asked where the money was. (NOT ... where the money was?)

2 When there is no question word (who, what, how etc), we use if or whether to introduce indirect questions.

The driver asked if/whether I wanted the town centre.
I don't know if/whether I can help you.

For the difference between if and whether, see 361.

285 reported speech: orders, requests, advice etc

We usually use an infinitive structure to report orders, requests, advice and suggestions.

verb + object + infinitive

I told Andrew to be careful.
The lady downstairs has asked us to be quiet after nine o'clock.
I advise you to think again before you decide which one to buy.
The policeman told me not to park there.

We do not use say in this structure.

She told me to be quiet. (NOT She said me to be quiet.)

For the exact difference between say and tell, see 289.
286 requests

1 We usually ask people to do things for us by making yes/no questions. (This is because a yes/no question leaves people free to say 'No' if they want to.)

Common structures used in polite requests:

Could you possibly help me for a few minutes? (very polite)
I wonder if you could help me for a few minutes? (very polite)
Could you help me for a few minutes?
You couldn't help me for a few minutes, could you?

2 If we use other structures (for example imperatives), we are not asking people to do things, but telling them to do things (giving orders). This may seem rude, and make people angry. Please changes an order into a polite order, but it does not change it into a request.

Please help me for a few minutes.
Carry this for me, please.
Please answer by return of post. Please type your letter.
You had better help me.
(These are all orders. They are NOT polite ways of asking people to do things for you.)

For the use of imperatives to give advice, make suggestions etc, see 170.

3 In shops, restaurants etc, we generally ask for things like this:

Can I have one of those, please?
Could I have a red one?
I'd like another glass of wine, please.
I would prefer a small one.
Could is a little 'softer' than can.

4 We do not use negative questions in polite requests. But we often use negative statements with question tags.

You couldn't give me a light, could you?
(NOT Couldn't you give me a light?)

For the use of negative questions, see 214.
For question tags, see 273.
For other rules of 'social' language, see 313.

287 road and street

1 A street is a road with houses on either side. We use street for roads in towns, but not for country roads.

Cars can park on both sides of our street.
Road is used for both town and country.

Cars can park on both sides of our road.
There's a narrow winding road from our village to the next one.

NOT...a narrow winding street...

2 Note that, in street names, we stress the word Road, but the word before Street.

Marylebone Road. 'Oxford Street.

288 the same

We always use the before same.

Give me the same again, please.

Give me same again, please.

I want the same shirt as my friend's.

NOT...a same shirt like my friend.

We use the same as before a noun or pronoun.

Her hair's the same colour as her mother's.

The same colour like her mother's.

We use the same that before a clause.

That's the same man that asked me for money yesterday.

289 say and tell

1 Tell means 'inform' or 'order'. After tell, we usually say who is told: a personal object is necessary.

She told me that she would be late. (NOT...She told that she...)
I told the children to go away.

Say is usually used without a personal object.

She said that she would be late. (NOT...She said me...)

If we want to put a personal object after say, we use to.

She said 'Go away' to the children.

2 Say is often used before direct speech. Tell is not.

She said 'Go away'. (NOT...She told 'Go away'.

3 In a few expressions, we use tell without a personal object. The most common: tell the truth, tell a lie, tell the time (= know how to read a clock).

I don't think she's telling the truth. (NOT...saying the truth.)

He's seven years old and he still can't tell the time.
290  see

1 When see means 'use one's eyes', it is not usually used in progressive tenses. We often use a structure with can instead (see 81).

   *I can see* a rabbit over there. (NOT *I'm seeing* . . . )

2 See can also mean 'understand'. We do not use progressive tenses.

   'We've got a problem. 'I see.' (NOT *I'm seeing*)

3 When see means meet, interview, talk to, progressive tenses are possible.

   *I'm seeing* Miss Barnett at four o'clock.

▷ For the difference between *look (at)*, *watch* and *see*, see 196.

291  seem

1 *Seem* is a 'copula verb' (see 91). After *seem*, we use adjectives, not adverbs.

   *seem + adjective*

   *You seem angry* about something. (NOT *You seem angrily* . . . )

2 We use *seem to be* before a noun.

   *seem to be + noun*

   I spoke to a man who *seemed to be* the boss.

3 Other structures: *seem* + infinitive; *seem like*.

   *seem + infinitive*

   *Ann seems to have* a new boyfriend.

   *seem like*

   North Wales *seems like* a good place for a holiday—let's go there. (NOT . . . *seems as* a good place . . . )

292  shall

1 *Shall* is a 'modal auxiliary verb' (see 202). We can use *shall* instead of *will* after *I* and *we*.

   *I'm catching the 10.30 train. What time shall I be in London?* (OR . . . *will I be in London?*)

Contractions are *I'll*, *we'll* and *shan't* (see 90).

   *I'll see you tomorrow.  I shaq't be late.*
When we make offers, or suggestions, and when we ask for orders or advice, we can use shall /we, but not will /we.

**Shall** I carry your bag?  **Shall we** go out for lunch?
What **shall we** do?

### 293 short answers

1 When we answer yes/no questions, we often repeat the subject and auxiliary verb of the question.

'Can he swim?' 'Yes, he can.'  'Has it stopped raining?' 'No, it hasn’t.'

Be and have can be used in short answers.

'Are you happy?' 'Yes, I am.'  'Have you a light?' 'Yes, I have.'

2 We can also use ‘short answers’ in replies to statements, requests and orders.

‘You’ll be on holiday soon.’ ‘Yes, I will.’  ‘You’re late.’ ‘No, I’m not.’
‘Don’t forget to telephone.’ ‘I won’t.’

3 We use *do* and *did* in short answers to sentences with no auxiliary verb.

‘She likes cakes.’ ‘Yes, she does.’
‘That surprised you.’ ‘It certainly did.’

### 294 should

1 **Forms**

*Should* is a ‘modal auxiliary verb’ (see 202). It has no -s in the third person singular.

*He should* be here soon. (NOT *He shoulds* . . . )

Questions and negatives are made without *do*.

*Should we* tell Judy? (NOT *Do we should* . . . ?)

*Should* is followed by an infinitive without to.

*Should I go?* (NOT *Should I to go?* )

2 **Obligation**

We often use *should* to talk about obligation, duty and similar ideas.

People *should* drive more carefully.

You *shouldn’t* say things like that to Granny.

*Should I* . . . ? is used to ask for advice, offer help or ask for instructions.

(Like *Shall I* . . . ?  See 292.)

*Should I go and see the police, do you think?*

*Should I* help you with the washing up?  What *should I* do?

For the differences between *should, ought* and *must*, see 295.
3 Deduction

We can use *should* to say that something is possible (because it is logical or normal).

*Henry should be here soon — he left home at six.*

*‘We’re spending the winter in Miami.’ ‘That should be nice.’*

4 *should have...*

We can use *should + perfect infinitive* to talk about the past. This structure is used to talk about things which did not happen, or which may or may not have happened (see 202.3).

*should + have + past participle*

*I should have phoned* Ed this morning, but I forgot.

*Ten o’clock: she should have arrived in her office by now.*

5 Conditional

*Should/would* is a conditional auxiliary (see 88).

*I should/would be* very happy if I had nothing to do.

For *should* after *in case*, see 172. For *should* in *that*-clauses, see 332.1.

For *should* and *would*, see 296.

295 *should, ought and must*

1 *Should* and *ought* are very similar. They are both used to talk about obligation and duty, to give advice, and to say what we think it is right for people to do. (See 294 and 232.)

*You ought to/should see ‘Daughter of the Moon’ — it’s a great film.*

There is sometimes a small difference. We use *should* or *ought* when we are talking about our own feelings, but we prefer *ought* when we are talking about ‘outside’ rules, laws, moral duties etc.

*Everybody ought to give five percent of their income to the Third World.*

2 *Must* is much stronger than *should* and *ought*. For example, we can give advice with *should* and *ought*; we can give orders with *must*. Compare:

*You ought to give up smoking* (= It’s a good idea.)
*The doctor said I must give up smoking* (= He told me to.)

We can use *should* and *ought* to say that something is probable; we can use *must* to say that it is certain. Compare:

*Henry ought to be at home now* (= There is a good reason to think he’s at home.)
*Henry must be at home now* (= There are reasons to be certain that he’s at home.)
296 should and would

There are really three different verbs.

1 should

This verb (I should/you should/he should etc) is used to talk about obligation, and in some other ways. For details, see 294.

2 would

This verb (I would/you would/he would etc) can be used to talk about past habits, and to make polite requests. For details, see 369.

3 should/would

This verb — the conditional auxiliary — has the following forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I should/would</th>
<th>you would</th>
<th>he/she/it would</th>
<th>we should/would</th>
<th>they would</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The conditional is used in sentences with if, and in some other ways. For details, see 88.

297 should after why and how

1 We can ask a question beginning Why should . . . ? to show that we do not understand something.

Why should it get colder when you go up a mountain? You're getting nearer the sun.

2 Why should I? and How should I know? show that we are angry.

'Give me a cigarette.' 'Why should I?'

'What's Susan's phone number?' 'How should I know?'

298 should: (If I were you) I should . . .

We often give advice by saying if I were you . . .

If I were you, I should get that car serviced.

I shouldn't worry if I were you.

Sometimes we leave out If I were you.

I should get that car serviced.

I shouldn't worry.

In sentences like these, I should has a similar meaning to you should.
similar words

In this list you will find some pairs of words which look or sound similar. Some others (for example lay and lie) are explained in other parts of the book. Look in the Index to find out where.

1 beside and besides

Beside = 'at the side of' or 'by'.

Come and sit beside me.

Besides = (a) 'as well as' (preposition)
(b) 'also', 'as well' (adverb)

a. Besides German, she speaks French and Italian.
b. I don't like those shoes. Besides, they're too expensive.

2 clothes and cloths

Clothes are things you wear: skirts, trousers etc.
Pronunciation: /ˈkləʊəz/.
Cloths are pieces of material for cleaning.
Pronunciation: /ˈkləʊθz/.
Clothes has no singular: we say something to wear, or an article of clothing, or a skirt etc, but not a clothe.

3 dead and died

Dead is an adjective.

a dead man Mrs McGinty is dead.
That idea has been dead for years.

Died is the past tense and past participle of the verb die.

Shakespeare died in 1616. (NOT Shakespeare dead ...)
She died in a car crash. (NOT She is dead in ...)

4 economic and economical

Economic refers to the science of economics, or to the economy of a country, state etc.

economic theory economical problems
Economical means 'not wasting money'.

an economical little car an economical housekeeper

5 elder and eldest; older and oldest

Elder and eldest are often used before the names of relations: brother, sister, son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter. Older and oldest are also possible.

My elder/older brother has just got married.
His eldest/oldest daughter is a medical student.
If I say my elder brother/sister, I only have one brother or sister older than me. If I have more, I say eldest.

We say elder son/daughter when there are only two; if there are more we say eldest.

Elder and eldest are only used before brother, sister etc. In other cases we use older and oldest.

She likes older men.
I'm the oldest person in my office.

6 experience and experiment

The tests which scientists do are called experiments.

Newton did several experiments on light and colour.

We also use experiment for anything that people do to see what the result will be.

Try some of this perfume as an experiment.

Experiences are the things that you 'live through': the things that happen to you in life.

I had a lot of interesting experiences during my year in Africa.

The uncountable noun experience means 'learning by doing things' or 'the knowledge you get from doing things'.

Salesgirl wanted experience unnecessarily.

7 female and feminine; male and masculine

Female and male say what sex people, animals and plants belong to.

A female fox is called a vixen.
He works as a male nurse.

Feminine and masculine are used for qualities and behaviour that are supposed to be typical of men or women.

She has a very masculine laugh.
It was a very feminine bathroom.

Feminine and masculine are also used for grammatical forms in some languages.

The word for 'moon' is feminine in French and masculine in German.

8 its and it's

Its is a possessive determiner, like my, your, his and her.

The cat's hurt its foot. (NOT . . . it's foot)

It's is a contraction for it is or it has.

It's late. (NOT its late) It's stopped raining.
9 last and latest

We use latest for things which are new.

What do you think of his latest film?

Last can mean 'the one before this'.

I like his new film better than his last one.

Last can also mean 'the one at the end', 'final'.

This is your last chance.

10 look after and look for

Look after = 'take care of'.

Will you look after the children while I'm out?

Look for = 'try to find'.

'What are you doing down there?' 'Looking for my keys.'

11 lose and loose

Lose is a verb — the opposite of find.

I keep losing my keys. (NOT . . . loosing . . .)

Loose is an adjective — the opposite of tight.

My shoes are too loose.

12 presently and at present

Presently most often means 'not now, later'.

'Mummy, can I have an ice-cream?' 'Presently, dear.'

He's having a rest now. He'll be down presently.

Presently is sometimes used to mean 'now', especially in American English. This is the same as 'at present'.

Professor Holloway is presently researching into plant diseases.

13 price and prize

The price is what you pay if you buy something.

What's the price of the green dress?

A prize is what you are given if you win a competition, or if you have done something exceptional.

She received the Nobel Prize for physics.

14 principal and principle

Principal is usually an adjective. It means 'main', 'most important'.

What is your principal reason for wanting to be a doctor?
The noun Principal means ‘headmaster’ or ‘headmistress’ (of a school for adults).

If you want to leave early you’ll have to ask the Principal.

A principle is a scientific law or a moral rule.

Newton discovered the principle of universal gravitation. She’s a girl with very strong principles.

15 quite and quiet

Quite is an adverb of degree — it can mean ‘fairly’ or ‘completely’. For details, see 274.

Our neighbours are quite noisy.

Quiet is the opposite of loud or noisy.

She’s very quiet. You never hear her moving about.

16 sensible and sensitive

If you are sensible you have ‘common sense’. You do not make stupid decisions.

‘I want to buy that dress.’ ‘Be sensible, dear. You haven’t got that much money.’

If you are sensitive you feel things easily or deeply — perhaps you can easily be hurt.

Don’t shout at her — she’s very sensitive. (NOT . . . very sensible.)

17 shade and shadow

Shade is protection from the sun.

I’m hot. Let’s sit in the shade of that tree.

We say shadow when we are thinking of the ‘picture’ made by an unlighted area.

In the evening your shadow is longer than you are.

18 some time and sometimes

Some time means ‘one day’. It refers to an indefinite time, usually in the future.

Let’s have dinner together some time next week.

Sometimes is an adverb of frequency (see 14.2). It means ‘on some occasions’, ‘more than once’.

I sometimes went skiing when I lived in Germany.
300 since (conjunction of time): tenses

Since can be a conjunction of time. The tense in the since-clause can be present perfect or past, depending on the meaning. Compare:

I've known her since we were at school together.
I've known her since I've lived in this street.

Note that the tense in the main clause is normally present perfect (see 243.4–6; 244.3).

I've known her since . . . (NOT I know her since . . .)

301 singular and plural: spelling of plural nouns

1 If the singular ends in consonant + -y (for example -by, -dy, -ry, -ty), change y to i and add -es.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...consonant + y</td>
<td>...consonant + ies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baby</td>
<td>babies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lady</td>
<td>ladies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ferry</td>
<td>ferries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>party</td>
<td>parties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 If the singular ends in ch, sh, s, x or z, add -es.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>church</td>
<td>churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crash</td>
<td>crashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bus</td>
<td>busses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>box</td>
<td>boxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buzz</td>
<td>buzzes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 With other nouns, add -s to the singular.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chair</td>
<td>chairs</td>
<td>boy</td>
<td>boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>table</td>
<td>tables</td>
<td>girl</td>
<td>girls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Some nouns ending in -o have plurals in -es. The most common:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>echo</td>
<td>echoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hero</td>
<td>heroes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negro</td>
<td>negroes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potato</td>
<td>potatoes</td>
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<tr>
<td>tomato</td>
<td>tomatoes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
302 singular and plural: pronunciation of plural nouns

The plural ending -(e)s has three different pronunciations.

1 After one of the 'sibilant' sounds /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/ and /dʒ/, -(e)s is pronounced /ɪz/.
   - buses/'bʌsɪz/  crashes/'kræʃɪz/  watches/'wɒtʃɪz/
   - quizzes/'kwɪzɪz/  garages/'ɡærəˌdʒɪz/  bridges/'brɪdʒɪz/

2 After any other 'unvoiced' sound (/p/, /t/, /θ/, /ð/ or /k/), -(e)s is pronounced /s/.
   - cups/'kʌps/  baths/'bɑːθz/  books/'bʊks/
   - coughs/'kɒfs/  plates/'pleɪts/

3 After all other sounds (vowels and voiced consonants except /z/, /ʒ/ and /dʒ/), -(e)s is pronounced /z/.
   - days/'deɪz/  knives/'naɪvz/  hills/'hɪlz/  dreams/'drɪːmz/
   - boys/'boɪz/  clothes/'klaʊðz/  legs/'legz/  songs/'sɔŋz/
   - trees/'triːz/  ends/'endz/

4 Exceptions:
   - house/'haʊs/  houses/'hauzɪz/  mouth/'maʊθ/  mouths/'maʊðz/
   - Third-person singular verbs (for example watches, wants, runs) and possessesives (for example George's, Mark's, Joe's) follow the same pronunciation rules.

303 singular and plural: irregular plurals

The most common words with irregular plurals are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
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<tr>
<td>calf</td>
<td>calves</td>
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<td>analysis</td>
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<td>sheep</td>
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<td>knife</td>
<td>knives</td>
<td>basis</td>
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<td>fish</td>
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<td>leaf</td>
<td>leaves</td>
<td>crisis</td>
<td>crises</td>
<td>aircraft</td>
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<td>loaf</td>
<td>loaves</td>
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<td>geese</td>
<td>vertebrae</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>tooth</td>
<td>teeth</td>
<td>men</td>
<td>criteria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>goose</td>
<td>geese</td>
<td>criterion</td>
<td>criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>men</td>
<td>phenomenon</td>
<td>phenomena</td>
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<tr>
<td>woman</td>
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<tr>
<td>mouse</td>
<td>mice</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2 Cattle, people and police are plural words with no singular.

   Cattle are selling for very high prices this year.
   (NOT Cattle is selling . . . )
   The police are searching for a tall dark man with a beard.
   (NOT The police is searching . . . )
   People are funny. (NOT People is funny . . . )

304 singular and plural: singular words ending in -s

Some words that end in -s are singular. Some important examples are:

a billiards, draughts and other names of games ending in -s
   Draughts is an easier game than chess.

b measles, rabies and other names of illnesses ending in -s
   Rabies is widespread in Europe. We hope we can keep it out of Britain.

c athletics, politics, mathematics and other words ending in -ics
   The mathematics that I did at school has not been very useful to me.

d news
   Ten o'clock. Here is the news.

305 singular and plural: singular words with plural verbs

1 We often use plural verbs with words like family, team, government, which refer to groups of people.
   My family have decided to move to Nottingham.

We also use plural pronouns, and we use who, not which.
   My family are wonderful. They do all they can for me.
   ‘How are the team?’ ‘They are very confident.’ ‘Not surprising.
   They’re the only team who have ever won all their matches right through the season.’

2 We prefer singular verbs and pronouns (and which) if we see the group as an ‘impersonal’ unit. (For example, in statistics.)
   The average family (which has four members) . . .

3 A number of and a group of are used with plural nouns, pronouns and verbs.
   A number of my friends feel that they are not properly paid for the work they do. (NOT A number of my friends feels . . . )

For singular and plural with a lot of, see 205.2.
singular and plural: plural expressions with singular verbs

1 When we talk about amounts and quantities we usually use singular verbs, pronouns and determiners, even if the noun is plural.

*Where's that* five pounds I lent you?

(NOT *Where are those* five pounds . . . ?)

Twenty miles *is* a long way to walk.

‘How much petrol have we got left?’ ‘About five litres.’ ‘That isn’t enough. We’ll have to get some more.’

For expressions like another six weeks, see 33.3.

2 The expression *more than one* is used with a singular noun and verb.

*More than one* person *is* going to lose his job.

3 Expressions like *one of my . . .* are followed by a plural noun and a singular verb.

*One of my friends* is going to Honolulu.

4 Some expressions joined by *and* have singular verbs. This happens when we think of the two nouns as ‘one thing’.

*Fish and chips* *is* getting very expensive.

(NOT *Fish and chips are . . . *)

*‘War and Peace’ is* the longest book I’ve ever read.

singular and plural: anybody etc

Anybody, anyone, somebody, someone, nobody, no-one, everybody and everyone are used with singular verbs.

*Is* everybody ready?

(NOT *Are* everybody ready?)

However, we often use *they, them* and *their* to refer to these words, especially in an informal style.

*If anybody* calls, *tell* them *I’m* out, *but take* their name and address. Nobody phoned, *did* they?

Somebody left *their* umbrella behind yesterday. Would *they* please collect it from the office?

Everybody thinks *they’re* different from everybody else.

*They, them* and *their* are not plural in sentences like these. They mean ‘he or she’, ‘him or her’ and ‘his or her’. In a more formal style, we usually use *he, him* and *his* (meaning ‘he or she’, etc).

*When somebody does not want to live,* *he* can be very difficult to help.
308 slow(ly)

In an informal style, we sometimes use slow as an adverb instead of slowly.

*Drive slow — I think we’re nearly there.*

*Can you go slow for a minute?*

Slow is used in road signs.

*SLOW — DANGEROUS BEND*

309 small and little

*Small* is used just to talk about size. It is the opposite of *big* or *large* (see 65).

*Could I have a small brandy, please?*

*You’re too small to be a policeman.*

The adjective *little* is used to talk about [size + emotion].

If we call something *little*, we usually have some sort of feeling about it — we like it, or we dislike it, or it makes us laugh, or we think it is sweet, for example.

*Poor little thing — come here and let me look after you.*

*What’s he like?* *Oh, he’s a funny little man.*

*What’s that nasty little boy doing in our garden?*

*They’ve bought a pretty little house in the country.*

*Little* is not usually used after a verb (see 10).

▷ For the determiners *little* and *few*, see 129.

310 smell

There are three ways to use *smell*.

1 As a ‘copula verb’ (see 91), to say what sort of smell something has. Progressive tenses are not used.

```plaintext
subject + smell + adjective
That smells funny. What’s in it? (NOT That is smelling . . . )
Those roses smell beautiful. (NOT . . . beautifully)
```

```plaintext
subject + smell of + noun
The railway carriage smells of beer and old socks.
```

2 To say what we perceive with our noses. Progressive tenses are not used. We often use *can smell* (see 81).

*Can you smell burning?  I can smell supper.*
To say that we are using our noses to find something out. Progressive tenses can be used.

'What are you doing?' 'I'm smelling my shirt to see if I can wear it for another day.'

### 311 so and not with hope, believe etc

1. We use so after several verbs instead of repeating a that-clause.
   
   'Do you think we'll have good weather?' 'I hope so.'
   
   ( = 'I hope that we'll have good weather. )

   The most common expressions like this are: hope so, expect so, believe so, imagine so, suppose so, guess so, reckon so, think so, be afraid so.

   'Is that Alex?' 'I think so.'
   
   'Did you lose?' 'I'm afraid so.'

   We do not use so before a that-clause.

   I hope that we'll have good weather.
   
   (NOT I hope so, that we'll have good weather.)

2. We can make these expressions negative in two ways.

   a. subject + verb + not

   'Will it rain?' 'I hope not.'
   
   'You won't be here tomorrow, will you.' 'I suppose not.'
   
   'Did you win?' 'I'm afraid not.'

   b. subject + do not + verb + so

   'You won't be here tomorrow.' 'I don't suppose so.'
   
   'Is he ready?' 'I don't think so.'
   
   'Will it rain?' 'I don't expect so.'

   Hope and be afraid are always used in the first structure.

   (We don't say I don't hope so or I'm not afraid so.)

   Think is usually used in the second structure.

   (We don't often say I think not.)

### 312 so am I, so do I etc

We can use so to mean also, in a special structure with

auxiliary verb + subject

so + auxiliary verb + subject

Louise can dance beautifully, and so can her sister.

'I've lost the address.' 'So have I.'
Be and have can be used in this structure, even when they are not auxiliary verbs.

I was tired, and so were the others.
I have a headache. So have I.

After a clause with no auxiliary verb, we use do/did.
I like whisky. So do I.

For the negative structure neither/nor am I, etc, see 217.

313 ‘social’ language

Every language has fixed expressions which are used on particular social occasions — for example, when people meet, leave each other, go on a journey, sit down to meals, and so on. English does not have very many expressions of this kind: here are some of the most important.

1 Introductions

Common ways of introducing strangers to each other are:

John, do you know Helen?
Helen, this is my friend John.
Sally, I don’t think you’ve met Elaine.
I don’t think you two know each other, do you?
Can/May I introduce John Willis? (more formal)

When people are introduced, they say Hello or How do you do? (more formal). Note that How do you do? is not a question, and there is no answer to it. (It does not mean the same as How are you?)

CELIA: I don’t think you two know each other, do you?
Alec Sinclair — Paul McGuire.

ALEC: How do you do?
PAUL: How do you do?

People who are introduced often shake hands.

2 Greetings

Hello. Hi. (very informal)

More formal greetings:
Good morning/afternoon/evening.

When leaving people:
Goodbye.
Bye. (informal)
Bye-bye. (often used to and by children)
See you. (informal)
Cheers. (informal)
Good morning/afternoon/evening/night. (formal)
3 Asking about health etc

When we meet people, we often ask politely about their health or their general situation.

How are you? How are things? (informal)
How's it going? (informal)

Answers:

Very well, thank you. And you? Fine, thank you.

Informal answers:

Not too bad.
OK.
So-so.
All right.
(It) could be worse.

4 Special greetings

Greetings for special occasions are:

Happy birthday! OR Many happy returns!
Happy New Year/Easter!
Happy/Merry Christmas!

5 Holidays

Before somebody starts a holiday, we may say:

Have a good holiday.

When the holiday is over, we may say:

Did you have a good holiday?

6 Journeys

We do not always wish people a good journey, but common expressions are:

Have a good trip. Have a good journey.
Safe journey home.

After a journey (for example, when we meet people at the airport or station), we may say:

Did you have a good journey/flight?
Did you have a good trip?

7 Meals

We do not have fixed expressions for the beginning and end of meals. At family meals, people may say something nice about the food during the meal (for example This is very nice) and after (for example That was lovely: thank you very much). Some religious people say 'grace' (a short prayer) before and after meals.
8 Visits and invitations

There are no fixed expressions which have to be used when you visit people.
Invitations often begin:

Would you like to . . . ?

Possible replies:

Thank you very much. That would be very nice.
Sorry. I'm afraid I'm not free.

It is normal to thank people for hospitality at the moment of leaving their houses.

Thank you very much. That was a wonderful evening.

9 Sleep

When somebody goes to bed, people often say Sleep well.
In the morning, we may ask Did you sleep well? Did you have a good night? or How did you sleep?

10 Giving things

We do not have an expression which is always used when we give things. We sometimes say Here you are, especially when we want to make it clear that we are giving something.

'Have you got a map of London?' 'I think so. Yes, here you are.'
'Thanks.'

11 Asking for things

We normally ask for things by using yes/no questions.

Could you lend me a pen? (NOT Please lend me a pen.)

For details, see 286.

12 Thanks

Common ways of thanking people are:

Thank you very much. Thank you.
Thanks. (informal) Thanks a lot. (informal)

If we want to reply to thanks, we can say:

Not at all. You're welcome.
That's (quite) all right. That's OK. (informal)

▷ For more information about please and thank you, see 249.
For requests (asking for things), see 286.
For the use of excuse me, pardon and sorry, see 121.
For the use of names and titles, see 211.
For expressions used when telephoning, see 341.
For rules for letter-writing, see 192.
Some and any are determiners (see 96). We use them before uncountable and plural nouns. Before another determiner or a pronoun we use some of and any of. Compare:

Would you like some ice-cream?
Would you like some of this ice-cream?
I can't find any cigarettes.
I can't find any of my cigarettes.

Some and any have the same sort of meaning as the indefinite article a/an (see 39). They refer to an indefinite quantity or number. Compare:

Have you got an aspirin? (singular countable noun)
Have you got any aspirins? (plural countable noun)
I need some medicine. (uncountable noun)

We usually use some in affirmative clauses, and any in questions and negatives. Compare:

I want some razor-blades.
Have you got any razor-blades?
Sorry. I haven't got any razor-blades.
We use some in questions if we expect or want people to say 'yes'; for example, in offers and requests.

Would you like some more beer?
Could I have some brown rice, please?
Have you got some glasses that I could borrow?
We use any after words that have a negative meaning: for example never, hardly, without. We often use any after if.

You never give me any help.
We got there without any trouble.
There's hardly any tea left.
If you want some/any help, let me know.

When some is used before a noun, it usually has the 'weak' pronunciation /səm/ (see 358).

For other uses of any, see 34, 35.
For other uses of some, see 315.
For somebody and anybody, something and anything etc., see 317.
For the difference between some/any and no article, see 316.
For not . . . any, no and none, see 221, 223.
315 some: special uses

1. We can use some (with the strong pronunciation /sʌm/) to make a contrast with others, all or enough.

   Some people like the sea; others prefer the mountains.
   Some of us were late, but we were all there by ten o'clock.
   I've got some money, but not enough.

2. We can use some (/sʌm/) with a singular countable noun, to talk about an unknown person or thing.

   There must be some job I could do.
   She's living in some village in Yorkshire.

   We can use this structure to suggest that we are not interested in somebody or something, or that we do not think much of somebody or something.

   Mary's gone to Australia to marry some sheep farmer or other.
   I don't want to spend my life doing some boring little office job.

316 some/any and no article

1. We use some and any when we are talking about fairly small numbers or quantities. Compare:

   Have you got any animals? (NOT - Have you got animals?)
   Do you like animals? (= all animals)

2. Some and any refer to uncertain, indefinite or unknown numbers or quantities. Compare:

   You've got some great pop records.
   You've got beautiful toes.
   (NOT - You've got some beautiful toes. This would mean an uncertain number — perhaps six or seven, perhaps more or less.)

   Would you like some more beer?
   (Not a definite amount — as much as the hearer wants.)
   We need beer, sugar, eggs, butter, rice and toilet paper.
   (The usual quantities — more definite.)

317 somebody and anybody, something and anything, etc

The difference between somebody and anybody, someone and anyone, somewhere and anywhere, something and anything is the same as the difference between some and any. (See 314.) Most important, we use
somebody etc in affirmative clauses, and anybody etc usually in questions and negatives.

There’s somebody at the door.
Did anyone telephone?
I don’t think anybody telephoned.
Let’s go somewhere nice for dinner.
Do you know anywhere nice?
I don’t want to go anywhere too expensive.

Somebody, something, anybody and anything are singular. Compare:

There is somebody waiting to see you.
There are some people waiting to see you.

318 sound

1 Sound is a ‘copula verb’ (see 91). We use it with adjectives, not adverbs.

You sound unhappy. What’s the matter?
(NOT You sound unhappily . . .)

2 We do not usually use sound in progressive tenses.

The car sounds a bit funny. (NOT The car is sounding . . .)

3 Note the structure sound like.

That sounds like Arthur coming upstairs.

319 spelling: capital letters

We use capital (big) letters at the beginning of the following words:

days, months and public holidays
Sunday Tuesday March September Easter Christmas

the names of people and places
John Mary Canada The United States Mars
North Africa The Ritz Hotel The Super Cinema

people’s titles
Mr Smith Professor Jones Colonel Blake Dr Webb

‘nationality’ and regional words (nouns or adjectives)

He’s Russian I speak German Japanese history
Catalan cooking

the first word (and often other important words) in the names of books, plays, films, pictures, magazines etc

Gone with the wind OR Gone with the Wind New Scientist
320 spelling: ch and tch, k and ck

1 After one vowel, at the end of a word, we usually write -ck and -tch for the sounds /k/ and /tʃ/.
   back neck sick lock stuck
catch fetch stitch botch hutch

Exceptions:
   rich which such much

2 After a consonant or two vowels, we write -k and -ch.
   bank work talk march bench
   break book week peach coach

321 spelling: doubling final consonants

When we add -ed, -ing, -er or -est to a word, we sometimes double the final consonant.
   big bigger sit sitting stop stopped

1 We double the following letters:
   b: rub rubbing n: begin beginner
d: sad sadder p: stop stopped
g: big bigger r: prefer preferred
l: travel travelling t: sit sitting
m: slim slimmer

2 We only double these letters when they come at the end of a word.
   Compare:
   hop hopping BUT hope hoping
   fat fatter BUT late later
   plan planned BUT phone phoned

3 We only double when there is one consonant after one vowel letter.
   Compare:
   fat fatter BUT fast faster (NOT fastter)
   bet betting BUT beat beating (NOT beatting)

4 In longer words, we only double a consonant if the last syllable of the word is stressed. Compare:
   up'set up'setting BUT 'visit 'visiting
   be'gin be'ginnering BUT 'open 'opening
   re'fer re'ferring BUT 'offer 'offering
Note the spelling of these words:

gallop  'galloping  'galloped  (NOT   gallopping  galloped)
develop  de' veloping  de' veloped  (NOT   developing  developed)

5 In British English, we double / at the end of a word even in an unstressed syllable.

'travel  'travelling  'equal  'equalled
(In American English, / is not doubled in unstressed syllables: 'travelling.)

6 The reason for doubling is to show that a vowel has a 'short' sound. This is because, in the middle of a word, a stressed vowel before one consonant is usually pronounced long. Compare:

hoping  /'hɑːpin/  hopping  /'hɒpin/
later  /'leɪtə(r)/  latter  /'lætə(r)/
dining  /'dainɪŋ/  dinner  /'dɪnə(r)/

322 spelling: final -e

1 When a word ends in -e, and we add something that begins with a vowel (-ing, -able or -ous), we usually leave out the -e.

hope  hoping
make  making
note  notable
fame  famous

This does not happen with words ending in -ee.

see  seeing  agree  agreeable

2 In words that end in -ge or -ce, we do not leave out -e before a or o.

courage  courageous  replace  replaceable

323 spelling: full stops with abbreviations

A full stop is the small dot (.) that comes at the end of a sentence. In American English, full stops are often used after abbreviations (shortened words), and after letters that are used instead of full names.

Mr. Lewis  Ms. Johnson  Andrew J. McCann
e.t.c.  e.g.  U.S.A.
S.E. Asia  T.S. Eliot

In British English, we now usually write abbreviations without full stops.

Mr Lewis  Ms Johnson  Andrew J McCann
e.t.c.  e.g.  U.S.A.
S.E. Asia  T.S. Eliot
324 spelling: hyphens

1 A hyphen is the short line (-) that we put between two words in an expression like book-shop or ex-husband.
   The rules about hyphens are complicated and not very clear. If you are not sure, look in the dictionary, or write an expression as two separate words. Note:
   a. We usually put a hyphen in a two-part adjective like blue-eyed, broken-hearted, grey-green, nice-looking.
   b. When we use a group of words as an adjective before a noun, we use hyphens. Compare:
       He's out of work. an out-of-work lorry driver
       It cost ten pounds. a ten-pound note
   c. In groups of words where the first word is stressed, we usually put hyphens. Compare:
       'book-case a paper 'bag
       'make-up to make 'up

2 We use a hyphen to separate the parts of a long word at the end of a line. (To see where to divide words, look in a good dictionary.)
   is not in accordance with the policy of the present government, which was . . .

325 spelling: ie and ei

   The sound /iː/ (as in believe) is often written ie, but not usually ei. However, we write ei after c. English children learn a rhyme:
   'i before e
   except after c.'
   believe chief field grief
   ceiling deceive receive receipt

326 spelling: -ise and -ize

   Many English verbs can be spelt with either -ise or -ize. In American English, -ize is preferred in these cases. Examples:
   mechanize/mechanise (GB) mechanize (US)
   computerize/computerise (GB) computerize (US)

   Words of two syllables usually have -ise in both British and American English.
   surprise (NOT surprize) revise advise comprise despise
   (but GB and US capsiz, baptiz, GB also baptiz)
A number of longer words only have -ise, in both British and American English. These include:

- compromise
- exercise
- improvise
- supervise
- televise
- advertise (US also advertize)

Note also analyse (US analyze).

If in doubt, use -ise— it is almost always correct, at least in British English.

**327 spelling: -ly**

1. We often change an adjective into an adverb by adding -ly.
   - late  lately  right  rightly  hopeful  hopefully
   - real  really (NOT realy)  definite  definitely
   - complete  completely (NOT completely)

2. -y changes to -i- (see 328).
   - happy  happily  easy  easily  dry  drily

3. If an adjective ends in -le, we change -le to -ly.
   - idle  idly  noble  nobly

4. If an adjective ends in -ic, the adverb ends in -ically.
   - tragic  tragically

5. Exceptions: truly, wholly, fully, shyly, publicly.

**328 spelling: y and i**

1. When we add something to a word that ends in -y, we usually change -y to -i-.
   - hurry  hurried  marry  marriage
   - happy  happily  fury  furious
   - easy  easier  merry  merriment
   - busy  business

   Generally, nouns and verbs that end in -y have plural or third person singular forms in -ies.
   - story  stories  hurry  hurries  spy  spies

2. We do not change -y to -i- before -i- (for example, when we add -ing, -ish, -ism, -ize).
   - try  trying  Tory  Toryism  baby  babyish
3 We do not change -y to -i- after a vowel letter.
   *buy* buying  *play* played  *enjoy* enjoyment
   *grey* greyish
   Exceptions: *say* said  *lay* laid  *pay* paid

4 We change -ie to -y- before -ing.
   *die* dying  *lie* lying

329 spelling and pronunciation

In many English words, the spelling is different from the pronunciation.
(This is because our pronunciation has changed over the last few hundred years, while the spelling system has stayed more or less the same.)
Here are some difficult common words:

1 two syllables, not three:
   asp(i)rin  bus(i)ness  diff(e)rent  ev(e)ning  ev(e)ry
   marri(a)ge  med(i)cine  om(e)lette  rest(au)rant  sev(e)ral

2 three syllables, not four:
   comf(or)table  secret(a)ry  temp(e)rate  veg(e)table  us(u)ally

3 silent letters:
   shou(l)d  cou(l)d  wou(l)d  ca(l)m  wa(l)k  ta(l)k  ha(l)f
   whis(t)le  cas(t)le  lis(t)en  fas(t)en  Chris(t)mas  of(t)en
   (w)rite  (w)rong  (k)now  (k)nite  (k)nee  (k)nock  (k)nob
   si(g)n  forei(g)n  champa(g)ne  clim(b)  com(b)  dum(b)  hym(n)  autum(n)
   w(h)ere  w(h)y  w(h)at  w(h)en  w(h)ich  w(h)ether  (h)onest  (h)onour  (h)our
   cu(p)board  i(s)land  i(r)on  mus(c)le  (p)sychology
   han(d)kerchief  san(d)wich  We(d)nesday
   (w)ho  (w)hose  (w)hole  g(u)ess  g(u)ide  g(u)itar
   dau(gh)ter  hi(gh)  hei(gh)t  li(gh)t  mi(gh)t  ri(gh)t
   strai(gh)t  throu(gh)  ti(gh)t  wei(gh)  nei(gh)bou  bou(gh)t  brou(gh)t  dau(gh)t  ou(gh)t  thou(gh)t
4  gh = /ŋ/  
cough  enough  laugh

5  ch = /k/  
architect  character  chemist  Christmas  headache  
toothache  stomach

6  a = /e/  
any  many  Thames

7  ea = /e/  
breakfast  dead  death  head  health  heavy  
leather  pleasure  read (past)  ready  bread  sweater  instead

8  ea = /ei/  
steak  break  great

9  o = /ə/  
brother  mother  love  company  come  
cover  mouth  money  one  nothing  onion  
other  some  son  stomach  government  wonder  
worry  London  honey  glove  lion

10  ou = /ʌ/  
country  couple  cousin  double  enough  trouble

11  u = /u/  
butcher  cushion  pull  push  put

12  words pronounced with /ai/  
dial  either  neither  buy  height  idea  iron  
microphone  biology  science  society

13  strange spellings:  
minute /ˈmɪnɪt/  
woman /ˈwʊmən/  
women /ˈwʊmɪn/  
friend /ˈfrend/  
Europe /ˈjuərəp/  
Asia /ˈeɪʃə/  
Australia /əˈstreɪlɪə/  
bicycle /ˈbaɪsɪkl/  
blood /ˈblɒd/  
foreign /ˈfɔrəni/  
juice /dʒuːs/  
theatre /ˈθɪətə(r)/  
one /wʌn/  
once /wʌns/  
two /tuː/  
area /ˈeəriə/  
heard /hɜːd/  
biscuit /ˈbɪskɪt/  
busy /ˈbɪziː/  
fruit /fruːt/  
moustache /ˈməʊstəʃ/  
heart /ˈhɑːt/
still, yet and already

1 Meanings

Still, yet and already are all used to talk about things which are going on, or expected, around the present. We use these words to say whether something is in the past, the present or the future.

a Still says that something is in the present, not the past — it has not finished.

She's still asleep.
It's still raining.

b Not yet says that something is in the future, not the present or past. We are waiting for it.

'Has Sally arrived?' 'Not yet.'
The postman hasn't come yet.

In questions, yet asks whether something is in the future or not.

Has the postman come yet?

Already says that something is in the present or past, not the future — perhaps it has happened sooner than we expected.

'When's Sally going to come?' 'She's already here.'
You must go to Scotland. 'I've already been.'

2 Position

Already and still go in 'mid-position' (see 13.2).

He's already gone.
When I was fourteen I already knew that I wanted to be a doctor.
(NOT Already when I was fourteen . . . )
She's still working.
I still remember your first birthday.
Yet usually goes at the end of a clause.

She hasn't gone yet.
I haven't done the shopping yet

3 Tenses

We usually use already and yet with the present perfect tense in British English.

She hasn't gone yet.
I've already forgotten.

For other meanings of still and yet, see a good dictionary.
For the meaning of ever, see 116.
subject and object forms

1 Six English words have one form when they are used as subjects, and a different form when they are used as objects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>subject</th>
<th>object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he</td>
<td>him</td>
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<tr>
<td>she</td>
<td>her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they</td>
<td>them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who</td>
<td>whom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compare:

I like dogs.  We went to see her.
Dogs don't like me.  She came to see us.
This is Mr Perkins, who works with me.
This is Mr Perkins, with whom I am working at the moment.

2 In informal English, we use object-forms (me, him etc) after be and in one-word answers.

‘Who’s that?’  ‘It’s me.’
‘Who said that?’  ‘Him.’

In a more formal style, we prefer to use a subject form with a verb.

‘Who said that?’  ‘He did.’

3 Whom is not often used in informal English. We prefer to use who as an object, especially in questions.

Who did you go with?
Who have you invited?

We use whom in a more formal style; and we must use whom after a preposition.

Whom did they arrest? (formal)
With whom did you go? (very formal)

4 After as, than, but and except, we use object forms in an informal style.

My sister’s nearly as tall as me.
I’m prettier than her.
Everybody but me knew what was happening.
Everybody except him can come.

Subject forms are used in a more formal style (usually with auxiliary verbs) after as and than.

My sister’s nearly as tall as I am.
I’m prettier than she is.
**332 subjunctive**

1. The subjunctive is a special verb form that looks the same as the infinitive. It is sometimes used to say that something should be done.

   *It's important that everybody write to the President.*
   *The Director asked that he be allowed to advertise for more staff.*

   In British English the subjunctive is unusual. We usually express this kind of idea with *should*.

   *It's important that everybody should write to the President.*
   *The Director asked that he should be allowed to advertise for more staff.*

2. We often use *were* instead of *was* after *if* and *I wish*. (See 165 and 367.)

   *If I were you, I would stop smoking.*  
   *I wish I were on holiday now.*

**333 suggest**

We do not use *suggest* with object + infinitive.

*My uncle suggested that I should get a job in a bank.*
*My uncle suggested getting a job in a bank.*
*(NOT My uncle suggested me to get ...)*

**334 such and so**

1. We use *such* before a noun (with or without an adjective).

   *She's such a fool.*
   *He's got such patience.*
   *I've never met such a nice person.*
   *It was such a good film that I saw it twice.*

   We use *so* before an adjective alone (without a noun).

   *She's so stupid.*
   *He's so patient with her.*
   *Your mother's so nice.*
   *The film was so good that I saw it twice.*

   We cannot use either *such* or *so* with the or a possessive.

   *I am happy to visit your country — it's so beautiful.*
   *(NOT ... your so_bautiful country...)*
So and such can be followed by that-clauses.

It was so cold that we stopped playing.
It was such a cold afternoon that we stopped playing.

Surely does not mean the same as certainly. Compare:

That’s certainly a mouse. (= I know that’s a mouse.)

Surely that’s a mouse? (= That seems to be a mouse. How surprising!)

Surely expresses surprise.
We can use surely not to show that we do not want to believe something, or find it difficult to believe.

Surely you’re not going to wear that hat?

Sympathetic is a ‘false friend’ for people who speak European languages. It does not mean the same as sympathique, sympathisch, sympatisk, simpatico etc.

The people in my class are all very nice/pleasant

(Not . . . very sympathetic)

Sympathetic means ‘sharing somebody’s feelings’ or ‘sorry for somebody who is in trouble’.

I’m sympathetic towards the strikers.
She’s always very sympathetic when people feel ill.

Take has three main meanings.

1 The opposite of give

She took my plate and gave me a clean one.
Who’s taken my bicycle?
‘Could I speak to Andrew?’ ‘I’m sorry, he’s not here just now. Can I take a message?’

We take something from/out of/off a place, and from a person.

Could you take some money out of my wallet?
They took everything away from me. (Not – They took me everything.)

2 The opposite of put

I took off my coat and put on a dressing gown.
He took a ring out of his pocket and put it on her finger.
3 The opposite of **bring**

We can use **take** for movements away from the speaker, and in other directions (see 71).

*Can you **take** me to the station tomorrow morning?*

**Take** this form to Mr Collins, ask him to sign it, and then **bring it back**.

For **take** with expressions of time, see 338.

338 **take** *(time)*

We can use **take** to say how much time we need to do something. Three constructions are possible.

- **person + take + time + infinitive**
  - *I took three hours to get home last night.*
  - *She takes all day to wake up.*

- **activity + take (+ person) + time**
  - *The journey took me three hours.*
  - *Gardening takes a lot of time.*

- **it + take (+ person) + time + infinitive**
  - *It took me three hours to get home last night.*
  - *It takes ages to do the shopping.*

339 **tall and high**

1. We use **tall** for things which are this shape:

   ![tall](triangle.png)

   We can talk about tall people, trees, and sometimes buildings.

   *How **tall** are you?* (NOT *How **high** are you?*)

   *There are some beautiful **tall** trees at the end of our garden.*

   We do not use **tall** for things which are this shape:

   ![tall](square.png)

   We use **high**.

   *Mont Blanc is the **highest** mountain in Europe.*
   (NOT ... the **tallest** mountain.)

   *It's a very **high** room.*
   (NOT ... **tall** room.)
2 We use *high* to say how far something is above the ground. A child standing on a chair may be *higher* than his father, but not *taller*.

3 Parts of the body are *long*, not *tall*.

*She's got beautiful long legs.* (NOT . . . *tall legs.*)

340 **taste**

We can use *taste* in three ways.

1 *Taste* can be a 'copula verb' (see 91). We can describe the taste of food etc by using \[ \text{taste + adjective} \] or \[ \text{taste of + noun} \].

Progressive tenses are not used.

\[ \text{taste + adjective} \]

*This tastes nice. What's in it?* (NOT *This is tasting . . . *)

*The wine tasted horrible.* (NOT . . . *horribly*)

\[ \text{taste of + noun} \]

*The wine tasted of old boots.*

2 We can talk about our sensations by using *taste* with a personal subject. Progressive tenses are not possible; we often use *can taste.* (See 81.)

*I can taste* garlic and mint in the sauce. (NOT *I am tasting . . . *)

3 We can talk about using our sense of taste to find something out.

*Stop eating the cake.* 'I'm just *tasting* it to see if it's OK.'
telephoning

1 We usually answer a private phone like this:
   *Hello. Abingdon three seven eight double two.* ( = 37822)
   Some people give their names.
   *Hello. Albert Packard.*

2 We ask for a person like this:
   *‘Could I speak to Jane Horrabin?’*

3 We can identify ourselves with the word *speaking*
   *‘Could I speak to Jane Horrabin?’ ‘Speaking.* ( = That’s me.)

4 Note the difference between *this* (the speaker) and *that* (the hearer).
   *This is Corinne. Is that Susie?*
   (Americans use *this* for both speaker and hearer.)

5 We ask for a number like this:
   *Could I have Bristol three seven eight seven eight?*
   *Could I have extension two oh four six?* ( = 2046)

6 The telephonist may say:
   *One moment, please.*
   *Hold on a moment, please.*
   *Trying to connect you.* (The number’s) *ringing for you.*
   *Putting you through now.*
   *I’m afraid this number is engaged/busy.*
   *I’m afraid this number is not answering/there’s no reply from this extension.*
   *Will you hold?* ( = *Will you wait?*)
   A possible answer to the last question:
   *No, I’ll ring again later. OR I’ll ring back later.*

7 If somebody is not there:
   *‘I’m afraid she’s not in at the moment. Can I take a message?’*
   *‘Yes. Could you ask her to ring me back this evening?’*

8 Other expressions:
   *I’m afraid you’ve got the wrong number.*
   *I’m sorry. I’ve got the wrong number.*
   *Could you speak louder? It’s a bad line.*
   *Could I possibly use your phone?*
   *What’s the code for London?*
   *How do I call the operator?*
I'd like to make a reversed charge call/transferred charge call to Washington 348 6767. (The person at the other end pays. Americans call this a collect call.)

342  telling the time

1  There are two ways of saying what time it is.

- Five past three  
- Three fifteen
- Ten past three  
- Three ten
- A quarter past three  
- Three fifteen
- Twenty past three  
- Three twenty
- Half past three  
- Three thirty
- Twenty-five to four  
- Three thirty-five
- A quarter to four  
- Three forty-five
- Five to four  
- Three fifty-five
- Three minutes to four  
- Three fifty-seven

2  In conversation, we do not usually use the 'twenty-four hour clock'. We can make a time more precise by saying in the morning, in the afternoon etc. or by saying a.m. (= 'before midday') and p.m. (= 'after midday').

3  We ask about the time like this:

What time is it?  What's the time?
What time does the match start?
tenses in subordinate clauses

1 In subordinate clauses (after conjunctions), we often use tenses in a special way. In particular, we use present tenses with a future meaning, and past tenses with a conditional meaning. This happens after if; after conjunctions of time like when, until, after, before, as soon as; after as, than, whether, where; after relative pronouns; and in reported speech.

**present for future**

She'll be happy if you telephone her.
I'll write to her when I have time. (NOT when I will have time.)
I'll stay here until the plane takes off.
She'll be on the same train as I am tomorrow.
We'll get there sooner than you do.
I'll ask him whether he wants to go.
I'll go where you go.
I'll give a pound to anybody who finds my pen.
One day the government will really ask people what they want.

**past for conditional**

If I had lots of money, I'd give some to anybody who asked for it.
(NOT who would ask for it.)
Would you follow me wherever I went?
In a perfect world, you could say exactly what you thought.

2 Sometimes we use a future tense in a subordinate clause. This happens if the main clause is not about the future. Compare:

I'll tell you when I arrive.
I wonder when I'll arrive.
I don't know if I'll be here tomorrow.

that: omission

We can often leave out the conjunction that, especially in an informal style.

1 Relative pronoun

We can leave out the relative pronoun that when it is the object of the relative clause.

Look! There are the people (that) we met in Brighton.

2 Reported speech

We can leave out that after more common verbs. Compare:

James said (that) he was feeling better.
James replied that he was feeling better.
(NOT James replied he was feeling better.)
3 After adjectives

We can use that-clauses after some adjectives. We can leave out that in more common expressions.

I’m glad (that) you’re all right.
It’s funny (that) he hasn’t written.

4 After so and such

We sometimes leave out that after so and such.

I came to see you so (that) you would know the truth.
I was having such a nice time (that) I didn’t want to leave.

345 there is

1 When we tell people that something exists (or does not exist), we usually begin the sentence with there is, there are etc, and put the subject after the verb.

There’s a hole in my sock. (NOT A hole is in my sock)

We use this structure with ‘indefinite subjects’ — for example, nouns with a/an, nouns with some, any, or no, nouns with no article, somebody, anything, nothing.

There’s some beer in the fridge.
Are there tigers in South America?
There’s somebody at the door.

2 We can use this structure with all simple tenses of be.

There has been nothing in the newspaper about the accident.
There will be snow on high ground.
There may be, there might be, there can be etc are also possible.

There might be rain later. There must be some mistake.

3 The infinitive of there is (there to be) is used after certain verbs and adjectives.

I don’t want there to be any trouble.
It’s important for there to be a meeting soon.

4 We can use there to introduce indefinite subjects of present and past progressive verbs.

There’s a man standing in the garden.
There was somebody looking at her.

5 Note the expression there’s no need to.

There’s no need to worry — everything will be all right.
346 think

1 Think can mean 'have an opinion'. In this meaning, it is not used in progressive tenses.

I don't think much of his latest book.
(NOT I'm not thinking much . . . )
Who do you think will win the election?
(NOT Who are you thinking . . . ?)

2 When think has other meanings (for example plan, or consider) progressive tenses are possible.

I'm thinking of changing my job.
What are you thinking about?

3 When think is used to introduce a negative idea, we usually construct the sentence I do not think . . . , not I think . . . not . . . (See 215.7.)

I don't think it will rain.
Mary doesn't think she can come.

▷ Note also the structures I think so, I don't think so. (See 311.)

347 this and that

1 We use this to talk about people and things which are close to the speaker, and for situations that we are in at the moment of speaking.

I don't know what I'm doing in this country.
(NOT . . . in that country.)
This is very nice — how do you cook it?
Get this cat off my shoulder.

We use that to talk about people and things which are more distant, not so close.

I don't like that boy you're going out with. (NOT . . . this boy . . .)
That smells nice — is it for lunch?
Get that cat off the piano.
We use *this* to talk about things which are happening or just going to happen (present or future).

I like *this* music. What is it? Listen to *this*. You'll like it.

We use *that* to talk about things which have finished.

*That* was nice. What was it? Who said *that*?

On the telephone, British people use *this* to talk about themselves, and *that* to talk about the hearer.

Hello. *This* is Elizabeth. Is *that* Ruth?

Americans often use *this* in both cases.

The difference between *this* and *that* is like the difference between *here* and *there* (see 159). See also come and go (83) and bring and take (71).

### 348 too

1. We can use an infinitive structure after *too*.

   ![too + adjective/adverb + infinitive](image)

   He's *too old to work*.
   It's *too cold to play* tennis.
   We arrived *too late to have* dinner.

   We can also use a structure with *for* + object + infinitive.

   ![too + adjective/adverb + for + object + infinitive](image)

   It's *too late for the pubs to be* open.
   The runway's *too short for planes to land*.

2. We can modify *too* with *much*, *a lot*, *far*, *a little*, *a bit* or *rather*.

   | *much too* old (NOT *very too* old) | *a little too* confident |
   | *a lot too* big | *a bit too* soon |
   | *far too* young | *rather too* often |

3. Don't confuse *too* and *too much*. We do not use *too much* before an adjective without a noun, or an adverb.

   ![You are *too kind* to me.](image)
   ![I arrived *too early*.](image)

4. Don't confuse *too* and *very*. *Too* means 'more than enough', 'more than necessary'. Compare:

   He's a *very* intelligent child.
   He's *too* intelligent for his class — he's not learning anything.
   It was *very* cold, but we went out.
   It was *too* cold to go out, so we stayed at home.
Travel, journey and trip

Travel means 'travelling in general'. It is uncountable (see 92).

My interests are music and travel.

A journey is one 'piece' of travelling.

Did you have a good journey? (NOT Did you have a good travel?)

A trip is a journey together with the activity which is the reason for the journey.

I'm going on a business trip next week.
( = I'm going on a journey and I'm going to do some business.)

We do not usually use trip for journeys which take a very long time.

Unless and if not

Very often, we can use unless to mean if . . . not.

Come tomorrow if I don't phone / unless I phone.
I'll take the job if the pay's not too low / unless the pay's too low.

We cannot always use unless instead of if not. It depends on the sense.

a. The sentence says 'A will happen if B does not stop it.' We can use if not or unless.

I'll come back tomorrow if there's not a plane strike.
(OR . . . unless there's a plane strike)
Let's have dinner out — if you're not too tired.
(OR . . . unless you're too tired)

b. The sentence says 'A will happen because B does not happen'. We can use if not, but not unless.

I'll be glad if she doesn't come this evening.
(NOT I'll be glad unless she comes this evening)
She'd be pretty if she didn't wear so much make-up.
(NOT . . . unless she wore so much make-up)

Until and by

We use until to talk about a situation or state that will continue up to a certain moment.

Can I stay until the weekend?

We use by to talk about an action that will happen on or before a future moment.

You'll have to leave by Monday midday at the latest.
( = at twelve on Monday or before.)
Compare:

'Can you repair my watch by Tuesday?'
( NOT ... until Tuesday)
'No, I'll have to keep it until Saturday.'

until twelve o'clock

by twelve o'clock

352 until and to

1 We usually use until (or till) to talk about 'time up to'.

I waited for her until six o'clock, but she didn't come.
( NOT I waited for her to six o'clock ...)

2 We can use to after from.

I usually work from nine to five. (OR ... from nine till five.)
We can also use to when we are counting the time until a future event.

It's another three weeks to the holidays. (OR ... until the holidays.)

3 We do not use until for space — only for time.

We walked to the edge of the forest. (OR ... as far as ...)
( NOT We walked till the edge of the forest.)

4 Until and till mean the same. They are used in the same way, except that we prefer until in more formal situations.

For the difference between until and by, see 351.

353 used to + infinitive

1 Used to + infinitive is only used in the past: it has no present form. We use it to talk about past habits and states which are now finished.

I used to smoke, but I've stopped.
She used to be very shy.

To talk about present habits and states, we usually just use the simple present tense (see 261).

He smokes. (NOT He uses to smoke.)
Her sister is still very shy.
In a formal style, *used to* can have the forms of a modal auxiliary verb (questions and negatives without *do*).

**Did you use to play football at school?** (informal)

**Used you to play football at school?** (formal)

**I didn't use to like opera, but now I do.** (informal)

**I used not to like opera, but now I do.** (formal)

A contracted negative is possible. (*I usedn't to like...*)

We do not use *used to* to say how long something took, or how often it happened.

**I lived in Chester for three years.**

(Not *I used to live in Chester for three years.*)

**I went to France seven times.**

(Not *I used to go to France seven times.*)

Note the pronunciation of *used /juːst/ and use /juːs/ in this structure.

Don’t confuse *used to + infinitive* and *be used to...-ing*

(see 354). The two structures have quite different meanings.

354  *(be) used to + noun or...-ing*

After *be used to*, we use a noun or an -ing form.

The meaning is quite different from *used to + infinitive* (see 353).

If you say that you are used to something, you mean that you know it well. You have experienced it so much that it is no longer strange to you

**be used to + noun**

*I'm used to London traffic — I've lived here for six years. At the beginning, I couldn't understand the Londoners, because I wasn't used to their accent.*

We can use an -ing form after *be used to*, but not an infinitive.

**be used to + ...-ing**

*I'm used to driving in London now, but it was hard at the beginning.*

(*NOT I'm used to drive...*)

*It was a long time before she was completely used to working with old people.*

*Get used to* means ‘become used to’.

*You'll soon get used to living in the country.*

For more information about structures with *to +...-ing*, see 181.
verbs with object complements

1 Some verbs are used with \textbf{object + adjective}.
They usually show how something is changed.

\begin{center}
verb + object + adjective
\end{center}

The rain \textbf{made} the grass wet.
Let's \textbf{paint} the door red.
Try to \textbf{get} it clean.
\textbf{Cut} the bread thin.
Keep and \textbf{leave} show how things are not changed.

\textbf{Keep} him warm.
You \textbf{left} the house dirty.

2 Other verbs are used with \textbf{object + noun}.

\begin{center}
verb + object + noun
\end{center}

They \textbf{elected} him President.
You have \textbf{made} me a very happy man.
Why do you \textbf{call} your brother 'Piggy'?

verbs with two objects

1 We use many verbs with two objects — a direct object and an indirect object. Usually the indirect object refers to a person, and comes first.

\begin{center}
verb + indirect object + direct object
\end{center}

He gave \textbf{his wife} a camera for Christmas.
Can you send \textbf{me} the bill?
I'll lend \textbf{you} some.

Some common verbs which are used like this:

- bring
- buy
- cost
- give
- leave
- lend
- make
- offer
- owe
- pass
- pay
- promise
- read
- refuse
- send
- show
- take
- tell
- write
We can also put the indirect object after the direct object, with a preposition (usually to or for). We do this when the direct object is much shorter than the indirect object, or when we want to give special importance to the indirect object.

\[
\text{verb + direct object + preposition + indirect object}
\]

* I took *it to the policeman.*
* She sent *some flowers to the nurse* who was looking after her daughter.
* Mother bought *the ice cream for you,* not for me.*

When both objects are personal pronouns, we more often put the direct object first.

* Give *it to me.* (Give *me it* is also possible.)
* Send *them to her.* (Send *her them* is also possible.)

In passive sentences, the subject is usually the person (not the thing which is sent, given etc).

* I've just been given a lovely picture.*
* You were paid three hundred pounds last month.*
But we can make the thing given etc the subject if necessary.

* 'What happened to the picture?' 'It was sent to Mr Dunn.*'

We do not use *explain, suggest or describe* with the structure

\[
\text{indirect object + direct object}
\]

* Can you explain *your decision to us?*
* Can you suggest *a good dentist to me?*
* Please describe *your wife to us.*

When *write* has no direct object, we put *to* before the indirect object.

* Write *me a letter.*
* Write *to me.* (*Write me* is not common in British English.)

For structures like *They made him captain,* see 355.2.
357 way

1 We often use way (= method) in expressions without a preposition.
   You’re doing it (in) the wrong way.
   You put in the cassette this way.
   Do it any way you like.
In relative structures, we often use the way that . . .
   I don’t like the way (that) you’re doing it.

2 After way, we can use an infinitive structure or of . . . -ing. There is no important difference between the two structures.
   There’s no way to prove/of proving that he was stealing.

3 Don’t confuse in the way and on the way.
   If something is in the way, it stops you getting where you want to go.
   Please don’t stand in the kitchen door — you’re in the way.
   On the way means ‘during the journey’ or ‘coming’.
   We’ll have lunch on the way.
   Spring is on the way.

▷ For by the way, see 97.1.

358 weak and strong forms

1 Some words in English have two pronunciations: one when they are stressed, and one when they are not. Compare:
   I got up at /æt/ six o’clock.
   What are you looking at? /æt/
Most of these words are prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, articles and auxiliary verbs. They are not usually stressed, so the unstressed (‘weak’) pronunciation is the usual one. This usually has the vowel /æ/ or no vowel. The ‘strong’ pronunciation has the ‘written’ vowel. Compare:
   I was late. /w(ə)z/ 
   It was raining. /w(ə)z/ 
   Yes, I was. /wəz/ 
   I must go now. /m(ə)s/ 
   I really must stop smoking. /mʌst/ 
   Where have you been? /(hə)v/ 
   You might have told me. /(ə)v/ 
   What did you have for breakfast? /hæv/ 
   (Have is not an auxiliary verb in this sentence.)
Contracted negatives always have a strong pronunciation.
   can’t /kænt/ 
   mustn’t /mʌstnt/ 
   wasn’t /wəznt/
The most important words which have weak and strong forms are:

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359 well

1 Well is an adverb, with the same kind of meaning as the adjective good. Compare:
   
   It's a good car. (adjective)  
   It runs well. (adverb)  
   
   She speaks good English.  
   She speaks English well. (NOT She speaks English good.)

Note that we cannot say She speaks well English.  
(Adverbs cannot go between the verb and the object — see 13.1.)

2 Well is also an adjective, meaning 'in good health'.  
   'How are you?' 'Quite well, thanks.'  
   I don't feel very well.

Well is not usually used before a noun.  
We can say She's well, but not a well girl.

▷ For ill and sick, see 169.

360 when and if

We use if to say that we are not sure whether something will happen.
   I'll see you in August, if I come to New York.  
   (Perhaps I'll come to New York; perhaps I won't.)

We use when to say that we are sure that something will happen.
   I'll see you in August, when I come to New York.  
   (I'm sure I'll come to New York.)

We can use both if and when to talk about things that always happen.
There is not much difference of meaning.
   If/When you heat ice, it turns into water.

361 whether and if

1 In reported questions (see 284), we can use both whether and if.
   I'm not sure whether/if I'll have time.  
   I asked whether/if she had any letters for me.

We prefer whether before or, especially in a formal style.
   Let me know whether you can come or not.  
   ( . . . if . . . is possible in an informal style.)

2 After discuss, only whether is possible.
   We discussed whether we should close the shop.  
   (NOT We discussed if . . . )
362 whether . . . or . . .

We can use whether . . . or . . . as a conjunction, with a similar meaning to it doesn't matter whether . . . or . . . The clause with whether . . . or . . . can come at the beginning of the sentence or after the other clause.

*Whether you like it or not,* you'll have to pay.
*You'll have to pay, whether you like it or not.*

363 which, what and who: question words

1 Determiners

We can use which and what before nouns to ask questions about people or things.

*Which teacher do you like best?*
*Which colour do you want — green, red, yellow or brown?*
*What writers do you like?*
*What colour are your girl-friend's eyes?*

We usually prefer which when we are choosing between a small number, and what when we are choosing between a large number. Before another determiner (for example the, my, these) or a pronoun, we use which of.

*Which of your teachers do you like best?*
*Which of them do you want?*

2 Pronouns

We can use which, what and who as pronouns, without nouns. We use who, not which, for people.

*Who won — Smith or Fitzgibbon?*
*Which would you prefer — wine or beer?*
*What would you like to eat?*

We usually use who, not whom, as an object.

*Who do you like best — your father or your mother?*
*(Whom do you like best . . . ? is very formal.)*

▷ For who and which as relative pronouns, see 277. For relative what, see 278.

364 who ever, what ever, how ever etc

These express surprise, or difficulty in believing something.

*Who ever is that girl with the green hair?*
*What ever are you doing?*
*How ever did you manage to start the car? I couldn't.*
*When ever will I have time to write some letters?*
Where ever have you been?
Why ever didn't you tell me you were coming?

For whoever, whatever etc, see 365.

365 whoever, whatever, whichever, however, whenever and wherever

These words mean 'it doesn't matter who', 'it doesn't matter what', etc. They are conjunctions: they join clauses together. Whoever, whatever and whichever are also relative pronouns: they can be the subjects or objects of clauses.

whoever etc + clause + clause
clause + whoever etc + clause

Whoever telephones, tell them I'm out.
I'm not opening the door, whoever you are.

Whatever you do, I'll always love you.
Keep calm, whatever happens.

'Which is my bed?' 'You can have whichever you like.'

However much he eats, he never gets fat.
People always want more, however rich they are.

Whenever I go to London I visit the National Gallery.
You can come whenever you like.

Wherever you go, you'll find Coca-Cola.
The people were friendly wherever we went.

366 will

1 Forms

Will is a 'modal auxiliary verb' (See 202). It has no -s in the third person singular; questions and negatives are made without do; after will, we use an infinitive without to.

Will the train be on time?

Contractions are 'll, won't.

Do you think it'll rain? It won't rain.

2 Future

We can use will as an auxiliary verb when we talk about the future. After I and we, will and shall are both possible with the same meaning.

i will/shall be happy when this is finished.
What will you do when you leave school?

For the different ways of talking about the future, see 134–140.
3 Willingness and intentions

We can use will (but not shall) to say that we are willing to do something, or to offer to do something.

‘Can somebody help me?’ ‘I will.’ ‘There’s the doorbell.’ ‘I’ll go.’

Will can express a firm intention, a promise or a threat.

‘I really will stop smoking.’ ‘I’ll kill her for this.’

We can use won’t to talk about refusal.

‘She won’t open the door.’
‘Give me a kiss.’ ‘No, I won’t.’

The car won’t start.

We can use wouldn’t for a past refusal.

‘The car wouldn’t start. She wouldn’t open the door.’

4 Requests and orders

We use will you to tell people what to do.

Will you send me the bill, please? Will you come this way?

Would you is ‘softer’, more polite.

Would you send me the bill, please? Would you come this way?

Will you have ...? can be used for offers.

Will you have some more potatoes? What will you have to drink?

5 Habits and characteristics

We can use will to talk about habits and characteristic (typical) behaviour.

She’ll sit talking to herself for hours.

Would is used for the past.

On Saturdays, when I was a child, we would all get up early and go fishing.

6 will and want

Don’t confuse will and want. Will is ‘interpersonal’ — we use it when our wishes affect other people: when we promise, offer, request etc. Want simply describes our wishes. Compare:

Will you open the window? (an order)
Do you want to open the window? (a question about somebody’s wishes).

She won’t tell anybody. (= She refuses to . . . )
She doesn’t want to tell anybody. (= She prefers not to . . . )

▷ For more information about would, see 369.
For information about shall, see 292.
367 wish

1 We can use wish + infinitive to mean want. Wish is more formal.
   
   I wish to see the manager, please.
   For the differences between wish, want, expect, hope and look forward to, see 122.

2 We can also use wish to express regrets — to say that we would like things to be different. We use a past tense with a present meaning in this case.

   I wish + subject + past tense
   
   I wish I was better-looking.
   I wish I spoke French.
   I wish I had a yacht.
   I wish it wasn't raining.
   
   In a formal style, we can use were instead of was after I wish.

   I wish I were better-looking. (formal)
   
   We can say I wish . . . would (but not I wish . . . will).

   I wish she would be quiet.
   I wish something interesting would happen.
   
   To talk about the past, we use a past perfect tense (had + past participle).

   I wish + subject + past perfect
   
   I wish I had gone to university.
   I wish I hadn't said that.
   
   If only is used in the same way. (See 167.) For other structures where we use a past tense with a present or future meaning, see 239.

3 We do not use wish in progressive tenses.

   I wish I knew why. (NOT am wishing . . .)

368 worth . . .-ing

We can use worth . . .-ing in two structures.

   it is (not) worth . . .-ing (+ object)
   
   It isn't worth repairing the car.
   Is it worth visiting Leicester?
   It's not worth getting angry with her.

   subject + is (not) worth . . .-ing

   The car isn't worth repairing.
   Is Leicester worth visiting?
   She's not worth getting angry with.
369 would

1 Forms

*Would* is a 'modal auxiliary verb' (see 202). There is no -s in the third person singular; questions and negatives are made without *do*; after *would*, we use the infinitive without *to*.

2 Meaning

We use *would* as a past form of *will*, or as a less definite, 'softer' form of *will*. Compare:

*I'll* be here at ten tomorrow.
I said *I would* be there at ten the next day.

*She will* talk to herself for hours. (present habit)
*She would* talk to herself for hours. (past habit)

*He won't* do his homework. (present refusal)
*He wouldn't* do his homework. (past refusal)

**Will** you open the window, please? (firm request)
**Would** you open the window, please? ('softer' request)

*Would* is the auxiliary verb for the 'conditional' of other verbs (see 88).

I *would* tell you if I knew.

▷ For the difference between *would* and *should*, see 296.
For more information about *will*, see 366.

370 would rather

1 *Would rather* means 'would prefer to'. It is followed by the infinitive without *to*. We often use the contraction *'d rather* : this means 'would rather', not 'had rather'.

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<th>would rather + infinitive without to</th>
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</table>

**Would you rather** stay here or go home?
'How about a drink?' *I'd rather* have something to eat.'

2 We can use *would rather* to say that one person would prefer another person to do something. We use a special structure with a past tense.

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*I'd rather* you went home now.
Tomorrow's difficult. *I'd rather* you came next weekend.
My wife *would rather* we didn't see each other any more.
'Shall I open a window?' *I'd rather* you didn't.

▷ For other structures where a past tense has a present or future meaning, see 239.
For another way of using *rather*, see 124.
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