Contents

Introduction 3
List of entries 5
Words used in the explanations 10
Phonetic alphabet 12
Basic English Usage 13
Index 276

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 I 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.
List of entries

1 abbreviations
2 about to
3 above and over
4 across and over
5 across and through
6 active verb forms
7 actual(ly)
8 adjectives ending in -ly
9 adjectives: order
10 adjectives: position
11 adjectives without nouns
12 adverbs of manner
13 adverbs: position (general)
14 adverbs: position (details)
15 after (conjunction)
16 after (preposition);
   afterwards (adverb)
17 after all
18 afternoon, evening and night
19 ages
20 ago
21 all (of) with nouns and pronouns
22 all with verbs
23 all, everybody and everything
24 all and every
25 all and whole
26 all right
27 almost and nearly
28 also, as well and too
29 although and though
30 among and between
31 and
32 and after try, wait, go etc
33 another
34 any (= 'it doesn't matter which')
35 any and no: adverbs
36 appear
37 (a)round and about
38 articles: introduction
39 articles: a/an
40 articles: the
41 articles: the difference between
   a/an and the
42 articles: talking in general
43 articles: countable and
   uncountable nouns
44 articles: a and an;
   pronunciation of the
45 articles: special rules and
   exceptions
46 as . . . as . . .
47 as, because and since (reason)
48 as and like
49 as if and as though
50 as much/many . . . as . . .
51 as well as
52 as, when and while (things
   happening at the same time)
53 ask
54 at, in and on (place)
55 at, in and on (time)
56 at all
57 be with auxiliary do
58 be + infinitive
59 be: progressive tenses
60 because and because of
61 before (adverb)
62 before (conjunction)
63 before (preposition) and
   in front of
64 begin and start
65 big, large, great and tall
66 born
67 borrow and lend
68 both (of) with nouns and
   pronouns
69 both with verbs
70 both . . . and . . .
71 bring and take
72 (Great) Britain, the United
   Kingdom, the British Isles and
   England
73 British and American English
74 broad and wide
75 but = except
76 by: time
77 can and could: forms
78 can and could: ability
79 can: possibility and probability
can: permission, offers, requests and orders
with remember, understand, speak, play, see, hear, feel, taste and smell

close and shut
come and go
comparison: comparative and superlative adjectives
comparison: using comparatives and superlatives
comparison: much, far etc with comparatives
comparison: comparative and superlative adverbs
conditional
conjunctions
contractions
‘copula’ verbs
countable and uncountable nouns
country
dare
dates
determiners
discourse markers
do: auxiliary verb
do + -ing
do and make
during and for
during and in
each: grammar
each and every
each other and one another
either: determiner
either... or...
ellipsis (leaving words out)
else
emphasis
emphatic structures with it and what
enjoy
enough
even
eventual(ly)
ever
every and every one
except
except and except for
exclamations
excuse me, pardon and sorry
expect, hope, look forward, wait, want and wish
explain
fairly, quite, rather and pretty
far and a long way
farther and further
fast
feel
(a) few and (a) little
fewer and less
for: purpose
for + object + infinitive
for, since, from, ago and before
future: introduction
future: present progressive and going to
future: shall/will (predictions)
future: shall and will (interpersonal uses)
future: simple present
future perfect
future progressive
gender (masculine and feminine language)
get + noun, adjective, adverb particle or preposition
get (+ object) + verb form
get and go: movement
go: been and gone
go meaning ‘become’
go... -ing
had better
half (of)
hard and hardly
have: introduction
have: auxiliary verb
have (got): possession, relationships etc
have: actions
have + object + verb form
have (got) to
List of entries

157 hear and listen (to)
158 help
159 here and there
160 holiday and holidays
161 home
162 hope
163 how and what . . . like?
164 if: ordinary tenses
165 if: special tenses
166 if-sentences with could and might
167 if only
168 if so and if not
169 ill and sick
170 imperative
171 in and into (prepositions)
172 in case
173 in spite of
174 indeed
175 infinitive: negative, progressive, perfect, passive
176 infinitive: use
177 infinitive after who, what, how etc
178 infinitive of purpose
179 infinitive without to
180 -ing form (‘gerund’)
181 -ing form after to
182 -ing form or infinitive?
183 instead of . . . -ing
184 inversion: auxiliary verb before subject
185 inversion: whole verb before subject
186 irregular verbs
187 it: preparatory subject
188 it: preparatory object
189 it’s time
190 last and the last
191 let’s
192 letters
193 likely
194 long and for a long time
195 look
196 look (at), watch and see
197 marry and divorce
198 may and might: forms
199 may and might: probability
200 may and might: permission
201 mind
202 modal auxiliary verbs
203 more (of): determiner
204 most (of): determiner
205 much, many, a lot etc
206 much (of), many (of): determiners
207 must: forms
208 must: obligation
209 must and have to; mustn’t, haven’t got to, don’t have to, don’t need to and needn’t
210 must: deduction
211 names and titles
212 nationality words
213 need
214 negative questions
215 negative structures
216 neither (of): determiner
217 neither, nor and not . . . either
218 neither . . . nor . . .
219 next and nearest
220 next and the next
221 no and none
222 no and not
223 no and not a/not any
224 no more, not any more, no longer, not any longer
225 non-progressive verbs
226 noun + noun
227 numbers
228 once
229 one and you: indefinite personal pronouns
230 one: substitute word
231 other and others
232 ought
233 own
234 participles: ‘present’ and ‘past’ participles (-ing and -ed)
235 participles used as adjectives
List of entries

236 participle clauses
237 passive structures: introduction
238 passive verb forms
239 past tense with present or future meaning
240 past time: the past and perfect tenses (introduction)
241 past time: simple past
242 past time: past progressive
243 past time: present perfect simple
244 past time: present perfect progressive
245 past time: past perfect simple and progressive
246 perfect tenses with this is the first time . . . , etc
247 personal pronouns (I, me, it etc)
248 play and game
249 please and thank you
250 possessive 's: forms
251 possessive 's: use
252 possessive with determiners (a friend of mine, etc)
253 possessives: my and mine, etc
254 prepositions after particular words and expressions
255 prepositions before particular words and expressions
256 prepositions: expressions without prepositions
257 prepositions at the end of clauses
258 prepositions and adverb particles
259 prepositional verbs and phrasal verbs
260 present tenses: introduction
261 present tenses: simple present
262 present tenses: present progressive
263 progressive tenses with always
264 punctuation: apostrophe
265 punctuation: colon
266 punctuation: comma
267 punctuation: dash
268 punctuation: quotation marks
269 punctuation: semi-colons and full stops
270 questions: basic rules
271 questions: word order in spoken questions
272 questions: reply questions
273 question tags
274 quite
275 real(ly)
276 reflexive pronouns
277 relative pronouns
278 relative pronouns: what
279 relative pronouns: whose
280 relatives: identifying and non-identifying clauses
281 remind
282 reported speech and direct speech
283 reported speech: pronouns; 'here and now' words; tenses
284 reported speech: questions
285 reported speech: orders, requests, advice etc
286 requests
287 road and street
288 the same
289 say and tell
290 see
291 seem
292 shall
293 short answers
294 should
295 should, ought and must
296 should and would
297 should after why and how
298 should: (If I were you)
  I should . . .
299 similar words
300 since (conjunction of time): tenses
301 singular and plural: spelling of plural nouns
302 singular and plural: pronunciation of plural nouns
303 singular and plural: irregular plurals
304 singular and plural: singular words ending in -s
List of entries

305 singular and plural: singular words with plural verbs
306 singular and plural: plural expressions with singular verbs
307 singular and plural: anybody etc
308 slow(ly)
309 small and little
310 smell
311 so and not with hope, believe etc
312 so am I, so do I etc
313 'social' language
314 some and any
315 some: special uses
316 some/any and no article
317 somebody and anybody, something and anything, etc
318 sound
319 spelling: capital letters
320 spelling: ch and tch, k and ck
321 spelling: doubling final consonants
322 spelling: final -e
323 spelling: full stops with abbreviations
324 spelling: hyphens
325 spelling: ie and ei
326 spelling: -ise and -ize
327 spelling: -ly
328 spelling: y and i
329 spelling and pronunciation
330 still, yet and already
331 subject and object forms
332 subjunctive
333 suggest
334 such and so
335 surely
336 sympathetic

337 take
338 take (time)
339 tall and high
340 taste
341 telephoning
342 telling the time
343 tenses in subordinate clauses
344 that: omission
345 there is

346 think
347 this and that
348 too
349 travel, journey and trip
350 unless and if not
351 until and by
352 until and to
353 used to + infinitive
354 (be) used to + noun or . . . -ing
355 verbs with object complements
356 verbs with two objects

357 way
358 weak and strong forms
359 well
360 when and if
361 whether and if
362 whether . . . or . . .
363 which, what and who: question words
364 who ever, what ever, how ever etc
365 whoever, whatever, whichever, however, whenever and wher-ever
366 will
367 wish
368 worth . . . -ing
369 would
370 would rather
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, you 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 /sɛt/, feel /fi:l/  a: another /ənˈðə(r)/

Consonants

1 abbreviations

1 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 /ˈðe bɪˈbiːsi:/ the USA /ˈðe juːˈesˈeɪ/

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

NATO /ˈneɪtəʊ/ (NOT the NATO)
OPEC /ˈɔːpek/ (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

1 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.

\[ \text{A is over B.} \]

*There is cloud over the South of England.*

And we use *over* when one thing crosses another. (Across is also possible.)

\[ \text{A is (moving) over/across B.} \]

*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.*

▷ 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

participles  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 friendliy, lovely or loveliely, 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.)

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:

\[
\text{verb + adverb}
\]

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.

\[
\text{adverb + adjective}
\]

It's terribly cold today.
(NOT... terrible cold...)

\[
\text{adverb + past participle}
\]

This steak is very badly cooked.
(NOT... bad cooked...)

\[
\text{adverb + adverb}
\]

They're playing unusually fast.
(NOT... unusual fast...)

\[
\text{adverb + adverbial phrase}
\]

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.
13 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.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{\ldots adverb + verb + object} & \quad & \text{verb + adverb + object} \\
\text{I very much like my job.} & \quad & \text{(NOT I like very much my job.)} \\
\text{\ldots verb + object + adverb} & \quad & \text{She speaks English well.} & \quad & \text{(NOT She speaks well English.)}
\end{align*}
\]

2 Initial, mid and end position

There are three normal positions for adverbs:

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

\text{Yesterday morning something very strange happened.}

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

\text{My brother completely forgot my birthday.}

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

\text{What are you doing tomorrow?}

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

\text{He got dressed quickly.} \quad \text{He quickly got dressed.} \\
\text{(Quickly can go in end or mid-position.)}

\text{He got dressed in a hurry.} \quad \text{(NOT He in a hurry got dressed.)} \\
\text{(In a hurry cannot go in mid-position.)}

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).

\text{However, not everybody agreed.} \text{(connecting adverb)}

\text{Tomorrow I've got a meeting in Cardiff.} \text{(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).

\text{He's been everywhere — he's even been to Antarctica.} \text{(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).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>auxiliary verb + adverb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have never seen a whale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can always come and stay with us if you want to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever played American football?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>be + adverb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My boss is often bad-tempered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m seldom late for work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adverb + other verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We usually go to Scotland in August.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It sometimes gets very windy here.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>auxiliary verb + adverb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He's been everywhere—he's <strong>even</strong> been to Antarctica.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm <strong>only</strong> going for two days.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>be + adverb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She's my teacher, but she's <strong>also</strong> my friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The people at the meeting were <strong>mainly</strong> scientists.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adverb + other verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your bicycle <strong>just needs</strong> some oil— that's all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She <strong>neither said</strong> thank-you <strong>nor looked</strong> at me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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**.

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

**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.
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).

\[ P \quad T \]

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

\[ P \quad T \]

Let's go **to bed early**. (NOT ... **early to bed**) 

\[ M \quad T \]

I worked **hard yesterday**.

\[ M \quad P \quad T \]

She sang **beautifully in the town hall last night**.

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

\[ P \quad M \]

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 + 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   be + number

   He is thirty-five.
   She will be twenty-one next year.

or   be + number + years old

   He is thirty-five years old.

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

2   Note the structure   be + ... age (without preposition).

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

20   ago

1   Position

   expression of time + ago

   I met her six weeks ago. (NOT ... ago six weeks.)
   It all happened a long time ago.
   How long ago did you arrive?

2   Ago is used with a past tense, not the present perfect.

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

3   The difference between ago and for

   Compare:
   I went to Spain six weeks ago. ( = six weeks before now)
   I went to Germany for six weeks this summer. ( = I spent six weeks
   in Germany.)

NOW

I went to Germany

PAST  for six weeks  I went to Spain

six weeks ago

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>all + plural</th>
<th>every + singular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All children need love.</td>
<td>Every child needs love.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All cities are noisy.</td>
<td>Every city is noisy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>all + determiner + plural</th>
<th>every + singular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please switch off all the lights.</td>
<td>Please switch off every light.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've written to all my friends.</td>
<td>I've written to every friend I have. (NOT ... every my friend.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 more rules about all, see 21–23.
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.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>almost never</em></th>
<th><em>NOT nearly never</em></th>
<th><em>hardly ever</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>almost nobody</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>hardly anybody</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>almost no money</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>hardly any money</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28 also, as well and too

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

(Al)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.

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

A and B
A, B and C
A, B, C and D

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

- any/no + comparative
- any/no different
- any/no good/use

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.

\[
\text{subject + appear (to be) + adjective}
\]

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

\[
\text{subject + appear to be + noun}
\]

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.

\[
\text{subject (+ adverb) + appear (+ adverb/adverb phrase)}
\]

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></th>
<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>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural countable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncountable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></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

Is X a plural noun?

YES

X or X’s (no article)

YES

THE X or X’s

A/AN X

SOME X or X’s

▌

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 (/ə/) changes to an, and the changes its pronunciation from /ðe/ to /ðiː/. Compare:

   a rabbit  an elephant  the sea /ðe sɪː/  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 'aʊər/  the hour /ðiː 'aʊər/  
   (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 /ðə/ before a consonant sound, even if it is written as a vowel.

   a university /ə juːni'vesəti/  the university /ðə juːni'vesəti/  
   a one-pound note
45 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*
telemgrams  *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 . . .

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>as + adjective + as</th>
<th>+ noun/pronoun/clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>as + adverb + as</td>
<td>+ noun/pronoun/clause</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

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 . . . 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)

| as/because/since + clause + clause 
| clause + as/because/since + clause |

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.

18 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.

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, ...
b As is a conjunction. We use as before a clause, and before an expression beginning with a preposition.

```
as + clause
as + preposition phrase
```

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

\[
\text{noun/adjective/adverb} + \text{as well as} + \text{noun/adjective/adverb} \\
\text{clause} + \text{as well as} - \text{ing . . . } \\
\text{As well as} - \text{ing . . . } + \text{clause}
\]

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.
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>While A was happening, B was happening.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>While A happened, B happened.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While A was happening/happened

```
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
BBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBBB
```

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As A happened, B happened.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B happened, as A happened.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 1 that man 2 the time.
   (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 /ət/, not /æt/ (see 358).

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.)

be with auxiliary do

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

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 I do not often be lonely.)
58 be + infinitive

I 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 is to visit Nigeria next month.
   We 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 are to eat all your supper before you watch TV.
   She can go to the party, but she's not to be back late.

3 You can often see be + passive infinitive in notices and instructions.
   (noun + is) + passive infinitive (= to be + past participle)
   (This form is) to be filled in in ink.
   Sometimes be is omitted.
   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 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:

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

I'm happy just now. (NOT I'm being happy just now.)
I was very depressed when you phoned.
( NOT + was being very depressed . . . )

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

60 because and because of

clause + because + clause
because + clause, + clause
because of + noun/pronoun

Because is a conjunction. It joins two clauses together.

I was worried because Mary was late.
Because I was tired, I went home.

Because of is a preposition (used before a noun or a pronoun).
I was late 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)

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

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.
63 **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)

64 **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.

![Diagram: BRING and TAKE]

*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'.
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?
It looks like it's going to rain.
He looked at me real strangely.

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.)
It looks as if it's going to rain. (See 49.3.)
He looked at me really strangely. (See 275.)

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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apartment</td>
<td>flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cab</td>
<td>taxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>tin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>candy</td>
<td>sweets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>check</td>
<td>bill (in a restaurant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closet</td>
<td>cupboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or cabinet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cookie</td>
<td>biscuit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corn</td>
<td>maize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crazy</td>
<td>mad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elevator</td>
<td>lift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fall</td>
<td>autumn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first floor</td>
<td>ground floor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>US</th>
<th>GB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>second floor</td>
<td>first floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>french fries</td>
<td>chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garbage</td>
<td>rubbish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or trash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gas(oline)</td>
<td>petrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highway</td>
<td>main road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intersection</td>
<td>crossroads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mad</td>
<td>angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mail</td>
<td>post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motor</td>
<td>engine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>movie</td>
<td>film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one-way</td>
<td>single (ticket)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pants</td>
<td>trousers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expressions with prepositions and particles:

**US**               **GB**
check something out   check something
do something over     do something again
fill in/out a form    fill in a form
meet with somebody    meet somebody
visit with somebody   visit somebody
Monday through Friday Monday to Friday
home                 at home
Mondays              on Mondays

3 Spelling

**US**               **GB**
aluminum             aluminium
analyze              analyse
catalog              catalogue
center               centre
check                cheque (from a bank)
color                colour
defense              defence
honor                honour

**US**               **GB**
jewelry              jewellery
labor                labour
pajamas              pyjamas
practice             practise (verb)
program              programme
theater              theatre
tire                 tyre (on a car)
traveler             traveller

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 can's ...)

Questions and negatives are made without do.

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

After can, we use the infinitive without to.

I can speak a little English. (NOT I 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* (*ka:n't*) 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?
(NOT . . . could you get?)
I managed to find a really nice dress in the sale yesterday.
(NOT + could find . . . )
After six hours’ climbing we succeeded in getting to the top of the mountain. (NOT . . . 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.

*Cou ld* 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 *I *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'm 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>

Note the pronunciation of:

younger /'jʌŋə(r)/
youngest /'jʌŋɪst/

longer /'lɒŋə(r)/

stronger /'strɒŋə(r)/

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

START HERE

Has the adjective got one syllable?

No

Has the adjective got two syllables?

No

Yes

Does the adjective end in -e?

No

Yes

Does the adjective end in -y?

No

Yes

Change y to i

Has the adjective got two vowels?

Yes

No

Does the adjective end in two consonants?

Yes

No

Double the last letter

ADD -R TO THE ADJECTIVE

ADD -ER TO THE ADJECTIVE

PUT MORE BEFORE 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.
   adjective + -er and adjective + -er
   more and more + adjective/adverb
   I'm getting fatter and fatter.
   We're going more and more slowly.
   (NOT . . . more slowly and more slowly.)

4 We can use comparatives with the . . . the . . . to say that two things
   change or vary together.
   the + comparative + subject + verb,
   the + comparative + subject + verb
   The older I get, the happier I am. (NOT Older I get . . .)
   The more dangerous it is, the more I like it.
   (NOT The more it is dangerous . . .)
   The more I study, the less I learn.

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.
   (NOT . . . 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 ... quieter?)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I would/should</th>
<th>you would</th>
<th>he/she/it would</th>
<th>we would/should</th>
<th>they would</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ infinitive without to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

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

| clause + conjunction + clause |
| conjunction + clause, + clause |

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.
2 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.'

3 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.)

4 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.)

90 contractions

1 Sometimes we make two words into one: for example

I've /aiv/ ( = I have); don't /dau/nt/ ( = 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 (= will not)</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 = haven'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 isn'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 |

### Contraction: pronunciation and meaning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contraction</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'm</td>
<td>/aɪm/</td>
<td>I am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've</td>
<td>/aɪv/</td>
<td>I have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll</td>
<td>/aɪl/</td>
<td>I will/shall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'd</td>
<td>/aɪd/</td>
<td>I had/would/should</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you're</td>
<td>/juː(r)/</td>
<td>you are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you've</td>
<td>/juːv/</td>
<td>you have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you'll</td>
<td>/juːl/</td>
<td>you will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you'd</td>
<td>/juːd/</td>
<td>you had/would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he's</td>
<td>/hiːz/</td>
<td>he is/has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he'll</td>
<td>/hiːl/</td>
<td>he will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he'd</td>
<td>/hiːd/</td>
<td>he had/would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she's</td>
<td>/ʃiːz/</td>
<td>she is/has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she'll</td>
<td>/ʃiːl/</td>
<td>she will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she'd</td>
<td>/ʃiːd/</td>
<td>she had/would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it's</td>
<td>/ɪts/</td>
<td>it is/has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it'll</td>
<td>/ɪtl/</td>
<td>it will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it'd</td>
<td>/ɪtəd/</td>
<td>it had/would (not often written)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we're</td>
<td>/wiə(r)/</td>
<td>we are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we've</td>
<td>/wiːv/</td>
<td>we have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we'll</td>
<td>/wiːl/</td>
<td>we will/shall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we'd</td>
<td>/wiːd/</td>
<td>we had/would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they're</td>
<td>/ðeɪə(r)/</td>
<td>they are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they've</td>
<td>/ðeɪv/</td>
<td>they have</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they'll</td>
<td>/ðel/</td>
<td>they will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they'd</td>
<td>/ðeɪd/</td>
<td>they had/would</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
aren't /aːnt/ are not
can't /kænt/ cannot
couldn't /'kudnt/ could not
daren't /dərənt/ dare not
didn't /'dɪdnt/ did not
doesn't /'dəznt/ does not
don't /daʊnt/ do not
hasn't /'hæznt/ has not
haven't /'hævnət/ have not
hadn't /'hædnt/ had not
isn't /'ɪzn't/ is not
mightn't /'maitnt/ might not
mustn't /'mʌstnt/ must not
needn't /'niːdnt/ need not
oughtn't /'ɔːtnt/ ought not
shan't /ʃɑːnt/ shall not
shouldn't /ʃʊdnt/ should not
wasn't /'wɒznt/ was not
weren't /'wɜːnt/ were not
won't /'wʊnt/ will not
wouldn't /'wʊdnt/ would not

Notes

a Am not is contracted to aren't (/aːnt/) 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.

![](image)

*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.

*a water (NOT a waters, two waters)*
*a wool (NOT a wools, two wools)*
*a weather (NOT a weathers, 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.
<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.

4 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

   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.
      (question and negative without do;
      third person without -s;
      following infinitive without to.)

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.

- 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, . . .’
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.'

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.'

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.

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/ ourselves. 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.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>each other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>themselves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 us/you/them**

**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 /'ædə(r)/ or /'iːdə(r)/ (in American English usually /'iːdə(r)/).

▷ 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.
110 emphasis

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 I don't enjoy to look . . .)
113  enough

1  Enough comes after adjectives (without nouns) and adverbs.

   adjective/adverb + enough

   Is it warm enough for you? (NOT . . . enough warm . . . )
   You’re not driving fast enough.

2  Enough comes before nouns.

   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).

   enough of + pronoun

   We didn’t buy enough of them.

   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.

   . . . enough . . . + infinitive

   She’s old enough to do what she wants.
   I haven’t got enough money to buy a car.

   . . . 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).

   auxiliary verb + even
   be + 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 . . . )

   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.*

**Eventual(ly)** 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’)*
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 who ever, 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

   except + infinitive without to
   except + me/him etc

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

- *expect* + object
- *expect* (+ object) + infinitive
- *expect* + that-clause
- *expect* so

I'm expecting a phone call.
I expect to see her on Sunday.
I'm expecting him to arrive soon.
I expect (that) he'll be here soon.
'Is Lucy coming?' 'I expect so.' (See 311.1.)

- *hope* for + object
- *hope* + infinitive
- *hope* + that-clause
- *hope* so

I'm hoping for a letter from Eric.
I hope to go to America next month.
I hope that they get here soon. (See 162.)
'Are the shops open tomorrow?' 'I hope so.' (See 311.1.)

- *look forward to* + object
- *look forward to* . . . -ing

I'm looking forward to the holidays.
I look forward to hearing from you. (See 181.)

- *wait*
- *wait and* . . .
- *wait* for + object
- *wait* + infinitive
- *wait* for + object + infinitive

'Can I go now?' 'Wait.'
'What's for supper?' 'Wait and see.'
I'm waiting for a phone call.
I'm waiting to hear from John.
I'm waiting for John to phone.

- *want* + object
- *want* (+ object) + infinitive

I want a new car.
I want to go home.
I want him to go home.

- *wish* (+ object) + infinitive
- *wish* + clause

I wish to see the manager. (formal)
I wish him to look at this. (formal)
I wish I had more money. (See 367.)
123 explain

After explain, we use to before an indirect object.

I explained my problem to her. (NOT I 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/many’. *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.

   *adjective + for + object + to-infinitive*

   *Is it usual for John to be so late?*
   *It’s unusual for the weather to be bad in July.*
   *It’s important for the meeting to start at eight.*
   *It’s unnecessary for all of us to go — one will be enough.*
   *I’m anxious for Peter to go to a good school.* ( = I want him to go . . . )
   *I’d be delighted for you to come* and stay with us.

   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 \(\text{for three months}\) \(\rightarrow\) NOW

   \(\text{since my birthday}\)

   \(\text{THEN from six o’clock} \rightarrow \text{NOW from now on}\)

   three years ago \(\leftarrow\) NOW

   three years before \(\leftarrow\) THEN

For details of the use of ago and before, see 20.4.

2. We use for to say how long something lasts.

   \[\text{for} + \text{period of time}\]

   I once studied the guitar \text{for three years}.
   That house has been empty \text{for six weeks}.
   We go away \text{for three weeks} every summer.
   My boss will be in Italy \text{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).
   \[\text{I’ve known her for a long time. (NOT I know her . . . )}\]

   A present progressive with for often refers to the future.
   \[\text{How long are you staying for? ( = Until when . . . )}\]

   We can leave out for with \text{How long . . . ?}
   \text{How long are you staying?}
   \text{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.

   \[\text{from/since} + \text{starting point}\]

   I’ll be here \text{from three o’clock} onwards.
   I work \text{from nine} to five.
   \text{From now on}, I’m going to go running every day.
   \text{From his earliest childhood} he loved music.
   I’ve been waiting \text{since ten o’clock}.
   I’ve known her \text{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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>for + period</th>
<th>since + starting point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I've known her <strong>for three days</strong>. I've known her <strong>since Tuesday</strong>. I've known her <strong>since Tuesday</strong>. I've known her <strong>since Tuesday</strong>. I've been here <strong>for a month</strong>. I've been here <strong>since July</strong>. I've had my car <strong>for ages</strong>. I've had my car <strong>since 1980</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

134 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 am...-ing**

and a structure with the present progressive of go **I am going to...**

*I'm seeing John tomorrow.* **She's going to** have a baby.

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.

\textbf{Shall} I open the window? \\
\textbf{Will} you give me a hand for a moment? \\
\textbf{I WILL} stop smoking! \\
\textbf{You'LL be sorry!}

For more details, see 137.

4 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.

about to (see 2)

I think the plane's about to take off.

be to (see 58)

The President is to visit Beijing.

135 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 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? \\
\textbf{We're going} to Mexico next summer. \\
\textbf{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.
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>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ infinitive without to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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/I 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’ll fall.**

I reckon it’ll cost about £7,000 to repair the roof. **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.

‘The phone’s ringing.’ I’ll answer it. (NOT I’m going to answer it.)
‘I’m going out for a drink.’ ‘Wait a moment and I’ll come with you.’ (NOT . . . 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.
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.

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.

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>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Woman</th>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>actor</td>
<td>actress</td>
<td>host</td>
<td>hostess</td>
<td>steward</td>
<td>stewardess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duke</td>
<td>duchess</td>
<td>monk</td>
<td>nun</td>
<td>waiter</td>
<td>waitress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bridegroom</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*).

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 **get + object + adjective** ( = 'make something become . . .').

I can't **get my hands warm**.
We must **get the house clean** before Mother arrives.
For *go + adjective (go green, go blind etc)*, see 146.

## 3 get + adverb particle or preposition

Before an adverb particle (like *up, away, out*) or a preposition, **get** nearly always refers to a movement.

I often **get up** at five o'clock.
I went to see him, but he told me to **get out**.
Would you mind **getting off** my foot?
We can use the structure with an object, to talk about making somebody/something move.

You can't **get her out of** the bathroom in the morning.
Would you mind **getting your papers off** my desk?
Have you ever tried to **get toothpaste back into** the tube?

For structures with **get (+ object) + verb**, see 143.

## 143 get (+ object) + verb-form

1 After **get**, we can use an object with an infinitive or *-ing* form.

**get + object + infinitive**

I can't **get the car to start**.

**get + object + -ing form**

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.

**Get John to help us, if you can.** I can't **get that child to go to bed**.

2 We can use **get + object + past participle** with a passive meaning, to talk about arranging for jobs to be done.

**I must get my hair cut.**
You ought to **get your watch repaired**.

3 We can use **get** instead of *be* to make passive structures. We often do this when we are talking about things that happen by accident or unexpectedly.

*My watch got broken* while I was playing with the children.
*He got caught* by the police driving at 160km an hour.

For similar structures with *have*, see 155.
144  **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 hunting
- go shooting
- go swimming
- go dancing
- go riding
- go shopping
- go fishing
- go sailing
- go skiing
- 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 hurrying/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’ (*’ave* 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*)
153 *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.*)

154 *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 bad 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 I 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 she 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.
(NOT If I will have enough time . . . )
I'll give her your love if I see her.
(NOT . . . if I will see her.)

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.)

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 . . . if 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.

| if + past perfect, perfect conditional |
| perfect conditional if + past perfect |

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 (\[had \text{ + past participle}\]) 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.

... *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.

\[
\begin{array}{l|l}
\text{*in spite of* + noun} & \text{*although* + clause} \\
\hline
\text{We went out *in spite of* the rain.} & \text{We went out *although* it was raining.} \\
\text{We understood him *in spite of* his accent.} & \text{We understood him *although* he had a strong accent.}
\end{array}
\]

*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*.
(\text{NOT He was driving fast *indeed*})
175  infinitive: negative, progressive, perfect, passive

1  Negative infinitive:  \[ \textit{not} + \text{infinitive} \]

Try \textit{not to be} late. (NOT \ldots \textit{to not be} late.)
I decided \textit{not to study} medicine. (NOT \ldots \textit{to not study} \ldots )
You’d better \textit{not say} that again.
Why \textit{not tell} me about your problems?

For the difference between the infinitive with and without \textit{to}, see 179.

2  Progressive infinitive:  \[ \textit{(to) be} \ldots \textit{-ing} \]

It’s nice \textit{to be sitting} here with you.
This time tomorrow I’ll \textit{be lying} on the beach.

3  Perfect infinitive:  \[ \textit{(to) have} + \text{past participle} \]

It’s nice \textit{to have finished} work.
Ann said she was sorry \textit{to have missed} you.
You should \textit{have told} me you were coming.

For perfect infinitives after modal verbs (\textit{should, might} etc), see 202.3.

4  Passive infinitive:  \[ \textit{(to) be} + \text{past participle} \]

There’s a lot of work \textit{to be done}.
She ought \textit{to be told} about it.
That window must \textit{be repaired} before tonight.

For the meaning of passive forms, see 237.

176  infinitive: use

1  Subject

An infinitive can be the subject of a sentence.
\qquad \textit{To learn} Chinese is not easy.

But we more often use a structure with \textit{it} as a ‘preparatory subject’ (see 187), or with an \textit{-ing} form as subject (see 180).
\qquad \textit{It is not easy} \textit{to learn} Chinese.
\textbf{Learning} Chinese isn’t easy.

2  After verb

We often use an infinitive after another verb.
\qquad \textit{It’s beginning to rain}
\qquad I \textit{expect to be free} tomorrow evening.
\qquad I \textit{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
decide mean 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.

verb + question-word + infinitive

I wonder who to invite.
Show me what to do.
Can you tell me how to get to the station?
I don’t know where to put the car.
Tell me when to pay.
I can’t decide whether to answer her letter.

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 I 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*.

**verb + object + infinitive without to**

*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    forgive    practise
- consider give up    put off
- delay    go         risk
- dislike  (can’t) help  (can’t) stand
- enjoy    imagine    spend time/money
- excuse   keep       suggest
- feel like mind       understand
- finish   miss

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.

'Kroftova'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

The auxiliary verb + subject + main verb

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?
(NOT Have arrived your father and mother?)
Where is the concert taking place?
(NOT 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.
(NOT . . . what time was the film starting.)
2 *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 . . . )

3 _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.'

4 **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._

5 **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._

6 **Exclamations**

Exclamations often have the same structure as negative questions (see 120.3).

_Isn’t it cold! Hasn’t she got lovely eyes!_

185 **inversion: whole verb before subject**

1 _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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arise</td>
<td>arose</td>
<td>arisen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awake</td>
<td>awoke</td>
<td>awoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>was, were</td>
<td>been</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beat</td>
<td>beat</td>
<td>beaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>become</td>
<td>became</td>
<td>become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>begin</td>
<td>began</td>
<td>begun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bend</td>
<td>bent</td>
<td>bent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bite</td>
<td>bit</td>
<td>bitten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bleed</td>
<td>bled</td>
<td>bled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blow</td>
<td>blew</td>
<td>blown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>break</td>
<td>broke</td>
<td>broken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bring</td>
<td>brought</td>
<td>brought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>build</td>
<td>built</td>
<td>built</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burn</td>
<td>burnt/burned</td>
<td>burnt/burned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buy</td>
<td>bought</td>
<td>bought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>could/was able</td>
<td>been able</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>catch</td>
<td>caught</td>
<td>caught</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>choose</td>
<td>chose</td>
<td>chosen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>come</td>
<td>came</td>
<td>come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td>cost</td>
<td>cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cut</td>
<td>cut</td>
<td>cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deal /dɪ:l/</td>
<td>dealt /delt/</td>
<td>dealt /delt/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dig</td>
<td>dug</td>
<td>dug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do</td>
<td>did</td>
<td>done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>draw</td>
<td>drew</td>
<td>drawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infinitive</td>
<td>Simple past</td>
<td>Past participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dream /dri:m/</td>
<td>dreamt /dremt/</td>
<td>dreamt /dremt/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drink</td>
<td>drank</td>
<td>drunk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drive</td>
<td>drove</td>
<td>driven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eat /i:t/</td>
<td>ate /et/</td>
<td>eaten /i:tn/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fall</td>
<td>fell</td>
<td>fallen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feel</td>
<td>felt</td>
<td>felt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fight</td>
<td>fought</td>
<td>fought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>find</td>
<td>found</td>
<td>found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fly</td>
<td>flew</td>
<td>flown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forget</td>
<td>forgot</td>
<td>forgotten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>forgive</td>
<td>forgave</td>
<td>forgiven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freeze</td>
<td>froze</td>
<td>frozen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get</td>
<td>got</td>
<td>got</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>give</td>
<td>gave</td>
<td>given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>went</td>
<td>gone/been</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grow</td>
<td>grew</td>
<td>grown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hang</td>
<td>hung</td>
<td>hung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have</td>
<td>had</td>
<td>had</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hear /hɪə(r)/</td>
<td>heard /hə:d/</td>
<td>heard /hə:d/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hide</td>
<td>hid</td>
<td>hidden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hit</td>
<td>hit</td>
<td>hit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hold</td>
<td>held</td>
<td>held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hurt</td>
<td>hurt</td>
<td>hurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keep</td>
<td>kept</td>
<td>kept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know</td>
<td>knew</td>
<td>known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lay</td>
<td>laid</td>
<td>laid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lead</td>
<td>led</td>
<td>led</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learn</td>
<td>learnt/learned</td>
<td>learnt/learned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leave</td>
<td>left</td>
<td>left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lend</td>
<td>lent</td>
<td>lent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>let</td>
<td>let</td>
<td>let</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lie</td>
<td>lay</td>
<td>lain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>light</td>
<td>lit/lighted</td>
<td>lit/lighted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lose</td>
<td>lost</td>
<td>lost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make</td>
<td>made</td>
<td>made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mean /mi:n/</td>
<td>meant /ment/</td>
<td>meant /ment/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meet</td>
<td>met</td>
<td>met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pay</td>
<td>paid</td>
<td>paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put</td>
<td>put</td>
<td>put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read /ri:d/</td>
<td>read /red/</td>
<td>read /red/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ride</td>
<td>rode</td>
<td>ridden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ring</td>
<td>rang</td>
<td>rung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rise</td>
<td>rose</td>
<td>risen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>run</td>
<td>ran</td>
<td>run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infinitive</td>
<td>Simple past</td>
<td>Past participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>say /sed/</td>
<td>said /sed/</td>
<td>said /sed/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see</td>
<td>saw</td>
<td>seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sell</td>
<td>sold</td>
<td>sold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>send</td>
<td>sent</td>
<td>sent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>set</td>
<td>set</td>
<td>set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shake</td>
<td>shook</td>
<td>shaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shine /ʃɔn/</td>
<td>shone /ʃɔn/</td>
<td>shone /ʃɔn/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shoot</td>
<td>shot</td>
<td>shot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>show</td>
<td>showed</td>
<td>shown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shut</td>
<td>shut</td>
<td>shut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sing</td>
<td>sang</td>
<td>sung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sit</td>
<td>sat</td>
<td>sat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sleep</td>
<td>slept</td>
<td>slept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smell</td>
<td>smelt/smelled</td>
<td>smelt/smelled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speak</td>
<td>spoke</td>
<td>spoken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spell</td>
<td>spelt/spelled</td>
<td>spelt/spelled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spend</td>
<td>spent</td>
<td>spent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stand</td>
<td>stood</td>
<td>stood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>steal</td>
<td>stole</td>
<td>stolen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stick</td>
<td>stuck</td>
<td>stuck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strike</td>
<td>struck</td>
<td>struck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swim</td>
<td>swam</td>
<td>swum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take</td>
<td>took</td>
<td>taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teach</td>
<td>taught</td>
<td>taught</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tear</td>
<td>tore</td>
<td>torn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tell</td>
<td>told</td>
<td>told</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think</td>
<td>thought</td>
<td>thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>throw</td>
<td>threw</td>
<td>thrown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understand</td>
<td>understood</td>
<td>understood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wake</td>
<td>woke</td>
<td>woken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wear</td>
<td>wore</td>
<td>worn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>win</td>
<td>won</td>
<td>won</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write</td>
<td>wrote</td>
<td>written</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 Verbs that are easy to confuse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>Simple past</th>
<th>Past participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fall</td>
<td>fell</td>
<td>fallen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feel</td>
<td>felt</td>
<td>felt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fill</td>
<td>filled</td>
<td>filled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lay ( = 'put down flat')</td>
<td>laid</td>
<td>laid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lie ( = 'be down')</td>
<td>lay</td>
<td>lain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lie ( = 'say things that are not true')</td>
<td>lied</td>
<td>lied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leave ( = 'go away')</td>
<td>left</td>
<td>left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live ( = 'be alive', 'be at home')</td>
<td>lived</td>
<td>lived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raise ( = 'put up')</td>
<td>raised</td>
<td>raised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rise ( = 'go up')</td>
<td>rose</td>
<td>risen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
187  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.

188  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.
191 Let's

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'.

192 letters

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 \[\text{be + likely + infinitive}\]
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 \[\text{it is likely + that-clause}\]
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

1 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?
(\text{NOT} You look angrily . . .)
The garden looks nice.

We can also use like or as if after look.

\[\text{look like + noun}\]
She looks like her mother.
'What's that bird?' 'It looks like a buzzard.'

\[\text{look as if + clause}\]
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 81.)

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.
2 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.

3 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 mays . . . )
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.’)
2 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 of 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 time is needed to learn a language.

There's lots of coffee in the pot. (NOT There are lots of coffee . . . )

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).

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.

much/many + of + determiner + noun

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?
3 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

1 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 baby-sitter.

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?)

2 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**

   ![Cartoon of people pointing and gesturing]

   When we talk about people, we can name them in four ways.
a First name. 
This is informal. We use first names mostly to talk about friends and children.

Where's Peter? He said he'd be here at three. 
How's Maud getting on at school?

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.

c 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.

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 **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 /ˈmɪs/  Ms /ˈmɪz, ˈmez/

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 /ˈdɒktə(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.)
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'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>neither + singular noun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

'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.

| neither of + determiner + plural noun | neither of + pronoun |

*Neither of my brothers* can sing.
*Neither of us* saw it happen.

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.

| neither/nor + auxiliary verb + subject |

'I can't swim.' *Neither* can I. (NOT + also can't.)
'I don't like opera.' *Nor* do I. (NOT + don't like.)

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.
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.

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.
2 We can use none alone, without a noun.
   ‘How many of the books have you read?’ ‘None.’

3 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:

\[
\begin{align*}
\frac{1}{8} & \text{ one eighth} & \frac{3}{7} & \text{ three sevenths} \\
\frac{2}{5} & \text{ two fifths} & \frac{11}{16} & \text{ eleven sixteenths}
\end{align*}
\]

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 (NOT one and a half hour)
1.3 millimetres (NOT 1.3 millimetre)

2 Decimals

We say decimal fractions like this:

\[
\begin{align*}
0.125 & \text{ nought point one two five} & (\text{NOT } 0.125 & \text{ nought comma one two five}) \\
3.7 & \text{ three point seven}
\end{align*}
\]

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.

7 and

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.

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.
(NOT ... for 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
definitions 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 feet 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:

- \(2 + 2 = 4\)  
  two and two is/are four (informal)  
  two plus two equals four (formal)

- \(7 - 4 = 3\)  
  four from seven is three (informal)  
  seven minus four equals three (formal)

- \(3 \times 4 = 12\)  
  three fours are twelve (informal)  
  three multiplied by four equals twelve (formal)

- \(9 \div 3 = 3\)  
  nine divided by three equals three

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 oubt, we use the infinitive with to. (This makes oubt different from other modal auxiliary verbs.)

You oubt to see a dentist.

2 Obligation

We can use oubt 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 oubt I to arrive?
I really oubt to phone Mother.
People oubt not to drive like that.

3 Deduction

We can use oubt to say that something is probable (because it is logical or normal).

Henry oubt to be here soon — he left home at six. ‘We’re spending the winter in Miami.” ‘That oubt to be nice.’

4 oubt to have . . .

We can use oubt + 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).

oubt to + have + past participle

I oubt to have phoned Ed this morning, but I forgot.
Ten o’clock: she oubt to have arrived at her office by now.

▷ For the differences between oubt, 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:  
\[
A \text{ does } B
\]

PASSIVE:  
\[
B \text{ is done (by A).}
\]

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><em>am/are/is + pp</em></td>
<td><em>English is spoken here.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present progressive</td>
<td><em>am/are/is being + pp</em></td>
<td><em>Excuse the mess: the house is being painted.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>simple past</td>
<td><em>was/were + pp</em></td>
<td><em>I wasn’t invited, but I went anyway.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past progressive</td>
<td><em>was/were being + pp</em></td>
<td><em>I felt as if I was being watched.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td><em>have/has been + pp</em></td>
<td><em>Has Mary been told?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past perfect</td>
<td><em>had been + pp</em></td>
<td><em>I knew why I had been chosen.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future</td>
<td><em>will be + pp</em></td>
<td><em>You’ll be told when the time comes.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future perfect</td>
<td><em>will have been + pp</em></td>
<td><em>Everything will have been done by Tuesday.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘going to’</td>
<td><em>going to be + pp</em></td>
<td><em>Who’s going to be invited?</em></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,</td>
<td>did he/she/it work?</td>
<td>he/she/it did not work,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc</td>
<td>etc</td>
<td>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 I 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

B happened.

I saw Bill.

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 I 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.

Other examples:

Have you read the Bible?

Mary has had a baby.

I've broken my leg.

Utopia has invaded Fantasia.

Do you know the Bible?

Baby.

I can't walk.

War.

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 written* six letters since lunchtime.

---

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I've studied hard for years.</td>
<td>NOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've known him since 1960.</td>
<td>NOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've always liked you.</td>
<td>NOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long have you been here?</td>
<td>NOW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We've always lived here.</td>
<td>NOW</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 known* him since 1960. (NOT *I know* him . . .)

7 Present perfect not used

We do not use the present perfect with adverbs of finished time (like yesterday, last week, then, three years ago, in 1960).

*I saw* Lucy yesterday. (NOT *I have seen* Lucy yesterday.)
*Tom was ill* last week. (NOT *Tom has been ill* last week.)
*What did you do then?* (NOT *What have you done then?*)
*She died three years ago* (NOT *She has died three years ago.*)
*He was born in 1960.* (NOT *He has been born in 1960.*)

We do not use the present perfect in 'narrative' — when we tell stories, or give details of past events. (See 241.)

▷ 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>
<th>Question</th>
<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 working? etc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>working, etc</td>
<td></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.

- **Past**: I've been working all day.
- **Past**: It's been raining all week.
- **Past**: You look hot.
- **Past**: Have you been waiting long?
- **Now**: I've been running.
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.

I’ve been living in Sally’s flat
for the last month.

PAST

My parents have lived in Bristol all their lives.

NOW

Some verbs are not used in progressive forms (see 225).

I’ve only known her for two days.
(NOT I’ve only been knowing her . . .)
I’ve had a cold since Monday. (NOT I’ve been having . . .)

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.
(NOT She learns English for . . .)
245 past time: past perfect simple and progressive

1 Forms

Past perfect simple

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I had worked you had worked he had worked, etc</td>
<td>had I worked? had you worked? had he worked? etc</td>
<td>I had not worked you had not worked, 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 you had been working, etc</td>
<td>had I been working? had you been working? etc</td>
<td>I had not been working, etc</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.

I realized that we had met before.

I 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 told her that I had finished.
I wondered who had left the door open.
I 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.
2 *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.*

3 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 . . . *)

4 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.

5 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.

6 *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!

7 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 . . . I don’t like)

Note that we do not always put *it* after *I know:*

‘It’s getting late.’ *I know* (NOT *I know it*)

8 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.
We do not use personal pronouns together with relative pronouns. (See 277.1.)

That's the girl who lives in the flat upstairs.

(Note: That's the girl who she lives . . .)

Here's the money (that) you lent me.

(Note: 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 . . . )

4 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**

- singular noun + ’s : my father’s car
- plural noun + ’s : my parents’ house
- irregular plural + ’s : the children’s room

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 OR 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.
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.

\[
\text{determiner} + \text{noun} + \text{of} + \text{possessive}
\]

That policeman is a friend of mine.
Here's that friend of yours.
I met another boyfriend of Lucy's yesterday.
He's a cousin of the Queen's.
Have you heard this new idea of the boss's?

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 somebody something)
   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 at/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:

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**

verb + preposition + noun

She *ran down* the road.

He *sat on* the table.

verb + preposition + pronoun

She *ran down* it.

He *sat on* it.

**Phrasal verbs**

(verbs with adverb particles)

verb + particle + noun  
verb + noun + particle

She *threw down* the paper.

She *threw the paper down*.

He *put on* his coat.

He *put his coat on*.

verb + pronoun + particle

She *threw it down*.

He *put it on*.

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*.

### 260 present tenses: introduction

‘Present tenses’ are used to talk about several different kinds of time.

1. **Now**, at this exact moment

   *Taylor* shoots — and it’s a goal!

   ![Diagram of past-present-future with "Taylor shoots" in the past]

2. **Around now**

   ‘What are you doing?’ *I’m reading.*

   *I’m going* to a lot of parties these days.

   ![Diagram of past-present-future with "What are you doing? I'm reading." in the present]
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, -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.

\[
\text{I go to London about three times a week.} \\
\text{My parents live near Dover.} \\
\text{Water freezes at 0° Centigrade.}
\]

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?)
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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc</td>
<td>etc</td>
<td>working, etc</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 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
2 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.

3 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.

4 We do not put commas before ‘reported speech’ clauses.

   Everybody realized that I was a foreigner.
   (NOT Everybody realized, that . . . )
   I didn’t know where I should go.
   (NOT I didn’t know, where . . . )
   Fred wondered if lunch was ready.
   (NOT Fred wondered, if . . . )

5 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 . . . )
   (NOT The blue dress was warmer, on the other hand . . . )

6 In numbers, we often use a comma after the thousands.

   3,164 = three thousand, one hundred and sixty-four

We do not use commas in decimals.

   3.5 = three point five or three and a half
   (NOT 3.5 three comma five)

▷ For the use of commas in relative clauses, see 280.

267 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 semi-colons, 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 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.
(Not Here's the book which you asked for it.)

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.
(Not . . . 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 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.

   \[ \text{I gave her the money that she needed.} \]

   \[ \text{The thing that I'd like most is a home computer.} \]
   \[ (\text{That refers to — repeats the meaning of — the money and the thing.}) \]

   We use *what* as \[ \text{noun + relative pronoun} \] together.

   \[ \text{I gave her what she needed. (What = the money that.)} \]

   \[ \text{What I'd like most is a home computer. (What = the thing that.)} \]

2. Do not use *what* with the same meaning as *that*.

   \[ \text{You can have everything (that) you like.} \]
   \[ (\text{NOT ... everything what you like.}) \]

   \[ \text{The only thing that makes me feel better is coffee.} \]
   \[ (\text{NOT ... The only thing what ...}) \]

   We use *which*, not *what*, to refer to a whole sentence that comes before.

   \[ \text{Sally married George, which made Paul very unhappy.} \]
   \[ (\text{NOT ... what made Paul very unhappy.}) \]

### 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:

   \[ \text{I saw a girl. Her hair came down to her waist.} \]
   \[ \text{I saw a girl whose hair came down to her waist.} \]

   \[ \text{This is Felicity. You met her sister last week.} \]
   \[ \text{This is Felicity, whose sister you met last week.} \]

   \[ \text{Our friends the Robbins — we spent the summer at their farmhouse — are moving to Scotland.} \]
   \[ \text{Our friends the Robbins, at whose farmhouse we spent the summer, are moving to Scotland.} \]

For the interrogative pronoun *whose*, see 253.3.
280 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.

281 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.
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*.
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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You look nice.</td>
<td>I told her she looked nice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm learning French.</td>
<td>She said she was learning French.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've forgotten.</td>
<td>He said he had forgotten.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John phoned.</td>
<td>She told me that John had 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.

**Original words**

- The earth **goes** round the sun.
- How old **are** you?

**Reported speech**

- He proved that the earth **goes/went** round the sun.
- I asked how old you **are/were**.

▷ 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.
(NOT Give me same again, please.)

I want the same shirt as my friend's.
(NOT I want 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.
(NOT 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.

[ ] tell + person

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 per cent 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:

| I should/would | you would | he/she/it would | we should/would | they would |

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: /ˈklauðz/.
Cloths are pieces of material for cleaning.
Pronunciation: /ˈkloʊθz/.
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 economic 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.
(NOT . . . several experiences . . .)

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 unnecessary.

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>-ch/-sh/-s/-x/-z</td>
<td>-ches/-shes/-ses/-xes/-zes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>church</td>
<td>churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crash</td>
<td>crashes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bus</td>
<td>buses</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tomato</td>
<td>tomatoes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 /ðʒ/, -es is pronounced /iz/.
   - buses /bʌsɪz/  crashes /'kraːʃɪz/  watches /ˈwɒtʃɪz/
   - quizzes /ˈkwɪzɪz/  garages /ˈɡærɪɡəz/  bridges /ˈbrɪdʒɪz/

2 After any other 'unvoiced' sound (/p/, /t/, /θ/, /t/ or /k/), -(e)s is pronounced /s/.
   - cups /kʌps/  baths /baːθz/  books /bʊks/
   - coughs /kʌfs/  plates /pleɪts/

3 After all other sounds (vowels and voiced consonants except /z/, /ʒ/ and /ðʒ/), -(e)s is pronounced /z/.
   - days /deɪz/  knives /naɪvz/  hills /hɪlz/  dreams /ˈdrɪ:mz/
   - boys /boʊz/  clothes /klaʊðz/  legs /legz/  songs /ˈsɔŋz/
   - trees /triːz/  ends /endz/

4 Exceptions:
   - house /hɔs/  houses /həʊzɪz/  mouth /maʊθ/  mouths /maʊðz/

Third-person singular verbs (for example watches, wants, runs) and possessives (for example George's, Mark's, Joe's) follow the same pronunciation rules.

singular and plural: irregular plurals

1 The most common words with irregular plurals are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>calf</td>
<td>calves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>half</td>
<td>halves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knife</td>
<td>knives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaf</td>
<td>leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life</td>
<td>lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loaf</td>
<td>loaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self</td>
<td>selves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shelf</td>
<td>shelves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thief</td>
<td>thieves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wife</td>
<td>wives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foot</td>
<td>feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tooth</td>
<td>teeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goose</td>
<td>geese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woman</td>
<td>women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mouse</td>
<td>mice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>series</td>
<td>series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analyses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crisis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cactus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fungus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nucleus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>radius</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bacterium</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vertebra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vertebrae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>criterion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>women</td>
<td>women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phenomenon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third-person singular verbs (for example watches, wants, runs) and possessives (for example George's, Mark's, Joe's) follow the same pronunciation rules.
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.
306 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.

307 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.

subject + smell + adjective

That smells funny. What's in it? (NOT That is smelling . . .)
Those roses smell beautiful. (NOT . . . beautifully)

subject + smell of + noun

The railway carriage smelt 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.
3 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 ‘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.

*Coul 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

1 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.

2 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)

3 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.

4 When some is used before a noun, it usually has the ‘weak’ pronunciation /sam/ (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 unhappyly . . . )

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
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

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 faster)
bet betting BUT beat beating (NOT beating)

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'ginning 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  de'velopping  de'veloped)

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 /'hupɪŋ/  hopping /'hɒpɪŋ/
later /'leətə(r)/  latter /'leətə(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
etc.  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
etc  e.g  USA
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:

   \[
   \begin{array}{ll}
   \text{He's out of work.} & \text{an out-of-work lorry driver} \\
   \text{It cost ten pounds.} & \text{a ten-pound note} \\
   \end{array}
   \]

   c. In groups of words where the first word is stressed, we usually put hyphens. Compare:

   \[
   \begin{array}{ll}
   \text{book-case} & \text{a paper bag} \\
   \text{make-up} & \text{to make up} \\
   \end{array}
   \]

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.)

   \[
   \ldots \text{is not in accordance with the policy of the present government, which was} \ldots
   \]

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:

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{\text{`i before e} } & \text{\text{except after c}}. \\
\text{believe} & \text{chief} & \text{field} & \text{grief} \\
\text{ceiling} & \text{deceive} & \text{receive} & \text{receipt} \\
\end{array}
\]

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:

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{mechanize/mechanise (GB) } & \text{mechanize (US)} \\
\text{computerize/computerise (GB) } & \text{computerize (US)} \\
\end{array}
\]

Words of two syllables usually have -ise in both British and American English.

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{surprise (NOT surprise) } & \text{revise} & \text{advise} & \text{comprise despit}
\end{array}
\]

(but GB and US caps-ize, baptize; GB also baptise)
A number of longer words only have -ise, in both British and American English. These include:

*compromise*  *exercise*  *improve*  *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 *complely*)

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*
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

We change -ie to -y- before -ing.

die dying lie lying

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:
   - com(f)oretable
   - 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
   - champ(a)ge
   - 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)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
   - (th)rou(gh)
   - t(i)ght
   - wei(gh)
   - nei(gh)bour
   - (b)ou(gh)t
   - (b)rou(gh)t
   - (c)au(gh)t
   - (o)ug(gh)t
   - (th)ou(gh)t
4 gh = /tʃ/
   cough enough laugh

5 ch = /kʃ/
   architect character chemist Christmas headache
toothache stomach

6 a = /eɪ/
   any many Thames

7 ea = /eɪə/
   breakfast dead death head health heavy
   leather pleasure read (past) ready bread sweater
   instead

8 ea = /ɪəɪər/
   steak break great

9 o = /ʌ/
   brother mother love company come
   cover mouth money one nothing onion
   other some son stomach government wonder
   worry London honey glove ion

10 ou = /ʌɪər/
    country couple cousin double enough trouble

11 u = /juːr/
   butcher cushion pull push put

12 words pronounced with /aɪər/
   dial either neither buy height idea iron
   microphone biology science society

13 strange spellings:
   minute /ˈmɪnɪt/
   woman /ˈwʊmən/
   women /ˈwʊmɪn/
   friend /ˈfrend/ 
   Europe /ˈjuərəpi/ 
   Asia /ˈɛsə/ 
   Australia /ˈɒstrəliə/ 
   bicycle /ˈbaɪsɪkl/ 
   blood /ˈblʌd/
   foreign /ˈfɔrən/
   juice /dʒuːs/ 
   theatre /ˈθɪətra(r)/ 
   one /wʌn/
   once /wʌns/
   two /tuː/ 
   area /ˈeərɪə/
   heard /hɜːd/
   biscuit /ˈbɪskɪt/
   busy /ˈbɪzi/ 
   fruit /fruːt/
   moustache /ˈmaʊstrəʃ/ 
   heart /hɑːrt/
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?

Cc 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 ↓16.
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>
</tr>
<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).

   *such (+ adjective) + noun*
   
   *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).

   *so + adjective*
   
   *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 beautiful 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.

**335 surely**

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?

**336 sympathetic**

*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.

**337 take**

*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*/*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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>person + <em>take</em> + time + infinitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>I took</em> three hours to get home last night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>She takes</em> all day to wake up.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>activity + <em>take</em> (+ person) + time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The journey took</em> me three hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gardening takes</em> a lot of time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It + <em>take</em> (+ person) + time + infinitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>It took</em> me three hours to get home last night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>It takes</em> ages to do the shopping.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

339 *tall* and *high*

1 We use *tall* for things which are this shape:

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:

![Triangle and rectangle symbols]

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**.

![Image](HIGH\_TALL.png)

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 **taste + adjective** or **taste of + noun**.

   - **taste + adjective**
     
     This **tastes nice**. What's in it?  
     (NOT *This is tasting* ...)
     
     The wine **tasted horrible**.  
     (NOT ... **horribly**.)

   - **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**.  

   *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
- ten past three
- a quarter past three

- twenty past three
- half past three
- twenty-five to four

- a quarter to four
- five to four
- three minutes to four

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 am (= 'before midday') and pm (= '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.
2 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?*

3 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
```

*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
```

*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.* (NOT . . . too much kind to me.)

*I arrived too early.* (NOT . . . too much early.)

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.*
349  **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.

350  **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.*)

351  **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

9 10 11 12 1 2 3

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 didn't 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 /ju:st/ and used /ju:s/ in this structure.

Don't confuse used to + infinitive and be used to ... -ing.
(see 354). The two structures have quite different meanings.

(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 \textcolor{red}{object + adjective}

They usually show how something is changed.

\begin{center}
\textcolor{red}{verb + object + adjective}
\end{center}

The rain \textcolor{red}{made} the grass wet.
Let's \textcolor{red}{paint} the door red.
Try to \textcolor{red}{get} it clean.
\textcolor{red}{Cut} the bread thin.
Keep and \textcolor{red}{leave} show how things are not changed.

\textcolor{red}{Keep} him warm.
\textcolor{red}{You left} the house dirty.

2 Other verbs are used with \textcolor{red}{object + noun}

\begin{center}
\textcolor{red}{verb + object + noun}
\end{center}

They \textcolor{red}{elected} him President.
\textcolor{red}{You have made} me a very happy man.
Why do you \textcolor{red}{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}
\textcolor{red}{verb + indirect object + direct object}
\end{center}

He gave \textcolor{red}{his wife a camera} for Christmas.
Can you send me \textcolor{red}{the bill}?
I'll lend you \textcolor{red}{some}.

Some common verbs which are used like this:

\begin{itemize}
\item bring
\item buy
\item cost
\item give
\item leave
\item lend
\item make
\item offer
\item owe
\item pass
\item pay
\item promise
\item read
\item refuse
\item send
\item show
\item take
\item tell
\item write
\end{itemize}
2 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.

3 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.)

4 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.'

5 We do not use explain, suggest or describe with the structure

\[
\text{indirect object + direct object}
\]

Can you explain your decision to us?
(NOT Can you explain us your decision?)
Can you suggest a good dentist to me?
(NOT Can you suggest me . . . ?)
Please describe your wife to us.
(NOT Please describe us your wife.)

6 When write has no direct object, we put to before the indirect object. Compare:

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 /ət/ 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 /ə/ or
   no vowel. The 'strong' pronunciation has the 'written' vowel. Compare:
   I was late. /w(e)z/  
   It was raining /w(e)z/  
   Yes, I 'was. /wəz/ 
   I must go now. /m(ə)s/  
   I really 'must stop smoking. /mʌst/  
   Where have you been? /(ə)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 /kɑːnt/  mustn't /mʌstnt/  wasn't /wʌznt/
The most important words which have weak and strong forms are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Weak form</th>
<th>Strong form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>/æ/</td>
<td>/eə/(unusual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>am</td>
<td>/(ə)m/</td>
<td>/æm/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>an</td>
<td>/(ə)n/</td>
<td>/æn/ (unusual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and</td>
<td>/(ə)n(d)/</td>
<td>/ænd/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are</td>
<td>/(ə)r/</td>
<td>/ə:(r)/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as</td>
<td>/æz/</td>
<td>/æz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at</td>
<td>/æt/</td>
<td>/æt/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>/bi:/</td>
<td>/bi:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>been</td>
<td>/bi:n/</td>
<td>/bi:n/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>but</td>
<td>/bʌt/</td>
<td>/bʌt/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>/k(ə)n/</td>
<td>/kæn/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>could</td>
<td>/kəd/</td>
<td>/kud/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do</td>
<td>/da:/</td>
<td>/du:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>does</td>
<td>/dəz/</td>
<td>/dæz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for</td>
<td>/fə(r)/</td>
<td>/fə:(r)/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from</td>
<td>/frəm/</td>
<td>/frəm/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had</td>
<td>/(h)əd/</td>
<td>/hæd/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has</td>
<td>/(h)əz,z,s/</td>
<td>/hæz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have</td>
<td>/(h)əv/</td>
<td>/hæv/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he</td>
<td>/(h)i:/</td>
<td>/hi:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>her</td>
<td>/(h)ə(r)/</td>
<td>/hə:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>him</td>
<td>/ɪm/</td>
<td>/hɪm/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>his</td>
<td>/ɪz/</td>
<td>/hɪz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is</td>
<td>/z,s/</td>
<td>/ɪz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>must</td>
<td>/m(ə)s/</td>
<td>/mʌst/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not</td>
<td>/nət/</td>
<td>/nət/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of</td>
<td>/əv/</td>
<td>/əv/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our</td>
<td>/(ə)r/</td>
<td>/əuə(r)/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint</td>
<td>/s(ə)nt/</td>
<td>/sent/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shall</td>
<td>/(ə)l/</td>
<td>/ʃəl/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she</td>
<td>/ʃi:/</td>
<td>/ʃi:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>should</td>
<td>/(ə)d/</td>
<td>/ʃʊd/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sir</td>
<td>/sə(r)/</td>
<td>/sə:(r)/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some</td>
<td>/s(ə)m/</td>
<td>/sʌm/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>than</td>
<td>/(ə)n/</td>
<td>/θæn/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that (conj.)</td>
<td>/θ(ə)t/</td>
<td>/θæt/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the</td>
<td>/θə; ði:/</td>
<td>/ði:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>them</td>
<td>/θ(ə)m/</td>
<td>/θəm/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there</td>
<td>/θə(r)/</td>
<td>/θəə(r)/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>/tə/</td>
<td>/tə/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>us</td>
<td>/əs/</td>
<td>/əs/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>was</td>
<td>/wəz/</td>
<td>/wəz/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>/wə/</td>
<td>/wə:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were</td>
<td>/wə(r)/</td>
<td>/wə:(r)/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who</td>
<td>/hu:/</td>
<td>/hu:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would</td>
<td>/wʊd; əd/</td>
<td>/wʊd/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will</td>
<td>/(ə)l/</td>
<td>/wil/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>/ju:/</td>
<td>/ju:/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your</td>
<td>/(ə)r/</td>
<td>/jo:(r)/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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’.

would rather + infinitive without to

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.

would rather + subject + past tense

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.
Index

a and an 38 – 45
  not a and no 223
  three times a day 256.4
a and one in numbers 227.8
a bit with comparatives 86
a bit too 348.2
(a) few and (a) little 129
a great deal 205.3
a group of + plural 305.3
a large number 205.3
(a) little and (a) few 129
a little too 348.2
a little with comparatives 86
a long time and long 194
a long way and far 125
a lot, much and many 205
a lot too 348.2
a lot with comparatives 86
a number of + plural 305.3
abbreviations 1
  full stops 323
ability at 254
about, around and round 37
about to 2
above and over 3
accommodation (uncountable) 92.3
across and over 4
across and through 5
act and play 248
active and passive structures 238.2
active verb forms 6
actual(ly) 7
addresses 192.1
adjectives:
  comparatives and superlatives 84 – 85
  ending in -ly 8
  without nouns 11
  order 9
  position 10
  with the (the blind etc) 11.3
adverb particles and prepositions 258
adverbs:
  comparatives and superlatives 87
  in -ly (spelling) 327
  of manner 12, 14.6
  position 13, 14
advice (uncountable) 92.3
advise + object + infinitive 176.3
afford + infinitive 176.2
afraid: I'm afraid (that) . . . 97.12
  + -ing or infinitive 182.8
afraid and frightened 10.3
afraid of 254
afraid, not 311
afraid (conjunction) 15
after and afterwards 16
after all 17
afternoon, evening and night 18
afterwards and after 16
age 19
ages 19
ago 20
ago and before 20.4
ago, before, from, since and for 133
ago and for 20.3
agree: prepositions 254
ain't 90.4
alive and living 10.3
all 21–25
  no preposition 256.2
  without the 45.4
all and every 24
all, everybody and everything 23
all and whole 25
all right and alright 26
all the same 97.4
allow + -ing or infinitive 182.5
  + object + infinitive 176.3
almost: position 14.5, 14.11
almost and nearly 27
alone and lone 10.3
already position 14.8
  with present perfect 243.4
already, still and yet 330
already, yet and ever 116.6
alright and all right 26
also: position 14.3
also, as well and too 28
also and even 114.3
although and though 29
always: position 14.2
  with progressive tenses 263
a.m. 342.2
am to . . . 58
American and British English 73
among and between 30
and 31
  both . . . and 70
  infinitive without to 179.4
  after try, wait, go etc 32
  words left out 108.2
angry: prepositions 254
another 33
anxious for + object + infinitive 132
any = 'it doesn't matter which' 34
  with comparatives 35, 86
  no preposition 256
not any and no 223
bad at 254
badly: position 14.6
be 91
    with do 57
    no progressive form 225.2
    progressive tenses 59
be to ... 58
bear: can't bear + -ing or infinitive 182.11
because and because of 60
because, since and as 47
become 91
been and gone 145
before (adverb) 61
    position 14.8
    with present perfect 243.4
before (adverb) and ago 20.4
before (adverb), ago, from, since and for 133
before (conjunction) 62
before (preposition) and in front of 63
begin + -ing or infinitive 182.11
begin and start 64
believe, negative structures 215.7
    prepositions 254
    no progressive form 225.2
believe so, not 311
belong: no progressive form 225.2
beside and besides 299.1
besides: position 14.1
better: had better 148
between and among 30
big, large, great and tall 65
billiards (singular) 304
blind: the blind 11.3
blue with cold 254
boring and bored 235.2
born 66
borrow and lend 67
both without the 45.4
    with verbs 69
both ... and 70
both (of) 68
bread (uncountable) 92.3
bring with two objects 356
bring and take 71
Britain, the United Kingdom, etc 72
British 212
British and American English 73
British Isles, Britain etc 72
Britisher 212
Briton 212
broad and wide 74
but: = except 75
    + infinitive without to 179.4
    with object forms 331.4
    words left out 108.2
buy with two objects 356
by: authors etc 255
time 76
by and until 351
by myself etc 276.3
by the way 97.1
bye 313.2
calculations 227.14
call 355.2
call after 254
can and can’t (deduction) 210.2
can and could 77–81
can’t bear + -ing or infinitive 182.11
can’t help . . . -ing 180.3
can’t stand . . . -ing 180.3
capital letters 319
for emphasis 110.1
cattle (plural) 303.2
cause + object + infinitive 176.3
certain + -ing or infinitive 182.10
certainly position 14.4
chairperson 141.3
cheers 313.2
Chinese 212
clearly position 14.4
clever at 254
close and shut 82
clothes and clothes 299.2
colon (: ) 265
come and go 83
come and 32.2
comma (,) 266
comparatives 84–87
completely position 14.5
conditional 88
conditional structures 164–168
congratulate, congratulations on 254
conjunctions 89
consider . . . -ing 180.3
contain: no progressive form 225.2
continue + -ing or infinitive 182.11
contractions 90
copula verbs 91
cost with two objects 356
could 77–81
with if 166
Could you . . . ? 286.1, 3
countable and uncountable nouns 92
with articles 43
country 93
cowardly 8.1

Danish 212
dare 94
+ infinitive 176.2
dash (--) 267
dates 95
days of the week: no preposition 256.3
dead, the dead 11.3
dead and died 299.3
def, the deaf 11.3
decide + infinitive 176.2
decimals 227.2
defining (identifying) and non-defining (non-identifying) relative clauses 280
definitely position 14.4
delay . . . -ing 180.3
depend: no progressive form 225.2
depend(ent) on 254
determiners 96
died and dead 299.3
different: prepositions 254
difficulty: prepositions 254
direct and indirect object 356
direct speech and reported speech 282
disappointed: prepositions 254
discourse markers 97
discuss (no preposition) 254, 256.1
discuss whether 361
discussion about 254
dislike . . . -ing 180.3
no progressive form 225.2
divide between, among 30.3
divide into 254
divorce 197
do 98–100
with be 57
+ -ing 99
do and make 100
doubling final consonants 321
dozen(s) 227.9
Dr 211.3
draughts (singular) 304
dream (prepositions) 254
dress in 254
drive into 254
during and for 101
during and in 102
Dutch 212
each 103
no preposition 256.2
each and every 104
each other and one another 105
each other and -selves 276.4
early 8.2
easy + infinitive 176.4
economical and economical 299.4
either (adverb): position 14.3
either (determiner) 106
either . . . or . . . 107
elder, eldest, older, oldest 10.2 299.5
elect 355.2
elipsis 108
else 109
emphasis 110, 111
emphatic position of adverbs 14.10
encourage + object + infinitive 176.3
England, Britain etc 72
English 212
enjoy 112
. . . -ing 180.3
enough 113
escaped 235.3
even 114
position 14.3, 14.11
even and also 114.3
even so 114.5
even though 29.1
evening, afternoon and night 18
eventually 115
eventually: position 14.8
ever 116
position 14.2
with present perfect 243.4
ever, yet and already 116.6
every 117
no preposition 256.2
every and all 24
everybody 117.5
+ singular verb 307
everybody and all 23.1
everybody + they/them/their 307
everyone 117.5
+ singular verb 307
everyone + they/them/their 307
everything 117.5
everything and all 23.2
example of 254
except 118
+ infinitive without to 179.4
with object forms 331.4
except and except for 119
exciting and excited 235.2
exclamations 120
excuse . . . -ing 180.3
excuse me, pardon and sorry 121
expect + infinitive 176.2, 3
expect, hope, wait etc 122
expect so, not 311
experience and experiment 299.6
explain 123
explain . . . to . . . 254
fail + infinitive 176.2
fairly, quite, rather and pretty 124
fall, feel and fill 186.2
fallen 235.3
family with plural verb 305
far with comparatives 86
far and a long way 125
far too 348.2
farther and further 126
fast 127
feel 128
with can 81
+ infinitive without to 179.2
no progressive form 225.2
feel, fall and fill 186.2
feel like . . . -ing 180.3
female and feminine 299.7
feminine words 141
few and little 129
fewer and less 130
fill, fall and feel 186.2
finally: position 14.8
finish . . . -ing 180.3
Finnish 212
first: position 9.3
firstly, secondly, . . . 97.3
fish and chips + singular verb 306.4
floor: first floor, etc 227.6
foot and feet (heights) 227.10
for: + object + infinitive 132
with present perfect 243.4
purpose 131
for and ago 20.3
for and during 101
for . . . reason 255
for and since with present perfect 244.3
for, since, from, ago and before 133
for a long time and long 194
forever 116.5
forget + -ing or infinitive 182.1
forgive . . . -ing 180.3
fractions 227.1
French 212
frequently: position 14.2
friendly 8.1
from, since, for, ago and before 133
full stop (.) 269
full stops with abbreviations 323
furniture (uncountable) 92.3
further and farther 126
future 134–140
in the past 88.2c
simple present tense 261.5
future perfect 139
future progressive 140
Index

game and play 248
gender 141
gerund 180–182
and participle 180.1
get 91, 142–144
+ object + adjective 355.1
prepositions 254
get and go 144
get divorced 197
get married 197
get used to 354
give with two objects 356
give up . . . -ing 180.3
giving things: what to say 313.10
go 91
= become 146
. . . -ing 147
go been and gone 145
go and come 83
go and get 144
go and 32.2
go on + -ing or infinitive 182.3
going to 135
gone (= disappeared, finished) 145.2
gone and been 145
good it’s no good . . . -ing 180.6
good at 254
good morning afternoon etc 313.2
goodbye 313.2
got have got 153, 156
government with plural verb 305
grapes (countable) 92.3
grass (uncountable) 92.3
great, big, large and tall 65
Great Britain, the United Kingdom, etc 72
great deal 205.3
greetings 313.2
group a group of + plural 305.3
grow 91
grown up 235.3
guess so, not 311

had better 148
hair (countable) 92.4.
(uncountable) 92.3
half 149
handicapped: the handicapped 11.3
happen + infinitive 176.2
happy birthday 313.4
happy Christmas etc 313.4
hard position 14.6
hard and hardly 150
hardly position 14.5
hardly and hard 150
hardly any 27.2, 314.3
hardly ever 27.2, 215.5
hate + -ing or infinitive 182.11
no progressive form 225.2
have 151–156
have a drink, a meal, a bath etc 154
have to and must 209
he 247
he and him 331
he or she 141.2
headache (countable) 92.3
hear: with can 81
+ infinitive without to 179.2
+ -ing or infinitive 182.6
no progressive form 225.2
hear and listen (to) 157
Hello 313.1, 313.2
help 158
+ infinitive 176.2, 3
help can’t help . . . -ing 180.3
her 247
here: position 14.7
word order 185.1
here and there 159
herself 276
Hi 313.2
high position 10.4
high and tall 339
him 247
him and he 331
himself 276
holiday and holidays 160
holidays: what to say 313.5
home 161
without preposition 256.8
hope 162
+ infinitive 176.2
negative structures 215.7
hope, expect, wish etc 122
hope for + object + infinitive 132.4
hope so, not 311
how: exclamations 120.1
+ infinitive 177
how and what . . . like 163
how are you? 313.3
how do you do? 313.1
how ever 364
how should . . . 297
however (conjunction) 365
however (discourse marker) 97.4
position 14.1
hundred(s) 227.9
hurry up and 32.2
hyphens 226.1, 324
I 247
I and me 331
Index

I mean 97.7
I suppose 97.11
idea of ...-ing 254
identifying and non-identifying relative clauses 280
if 164–168
   in reported questions 284.2
if and in case 172.2
if and when 360
if and whether 361
if ... any 314.3
if I were you, I should ... 298
if not and unless 350
if only 167
if so, if not 168
ill and sick 10.3, 169
ill with 254
I'm afraid 97.12
imagine ...-ing 180.3
   negative structures 215.7
   no progressive form 225.2
imagine so, not 311
imperative 170
impress: no progressive form 225.2
impressed: prepositions 254
in at and on (place) 54
in at and on (time) 55
in and during 102
in and into 171
in a suit, hat etc 255
in a ... voice 255
in case 172
in front of and before 63
in order to 178
in pen, pencil etc 255
in spite of 173
in the end and at the end 255
in the rain, snow etc 255
in the way and on the way 357.3
(in) this way etc 256.7
in time and on time 255
include: no progressive form 225.2
indeed after very 174
indefinite pronouns 229
independence: prepositions 254
independent of 254
indirect and direct object 356
indirect speech (reported speech) 282–285
infinitive or -ing form 182
infinitives 175–179
-ing form 180–182
information (uncountable) 92.3
insist on 254
instead of ...-ing 183
intend + infinitive 176.2
   + -ing or infinitive 182.11
interest(ed) in 254
interesting and interested 235.2
into and in 171
introductions 313.1
inversion 184, 185
inverted commas ("...") 268
invitations: what to say 313.8
invite + object + infinitive 176.3
Irish 212
irregular plurals 303
irregular verbs 186
it 247
   emphatic structures 111
   used for a person 247.3
   preparatory object 188
   preparatory subject 187
italics for emphasis 110.1
it's no good ...-ing 180.6
it's no use ...-ing 180.6
it's time 189
its and it's 299.8
itself 276
Japanese 212
journey, travel and trip 92.3, 349
journeys: what to say 313.6
just: position 14.3, 14.8, 14.11
keep 91
   ...-ing 180.3
      + object + adjective 355.1
kind of 97.8
   position 14.5
kind to 254
know I know and I know it 247.7
   no progressive form 225.2
knowledge (uncountable) 92.3
lack: no preposition 256.1
large, big, great and tall 65
large number 205.3
last: position 9.3, 14.8
   no preposition 256.2
last and latest 299.9
last and the last 190
latest and last 299.9
laugh at 254
lay and lie 186.2
learn + infinitive 176.2
least 84.2
leave + object + adjective 355.1
   with two objects 356
leave and live 186.2
lend with two objects 356
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lend and borrow</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less and fewer</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less and least</td>
<td>84.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>let + infinitive without to</td>
<td>179.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>let me see</td>
<td>97.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>let's</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>letters</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lie and lay</td>
<td>186.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lightning</td>
<td>92.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like: + -ing or infinitive</td>
<td>182.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no progressive form</td>
<td>225.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like and as</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like and as if/though</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>likely</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listen to</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listen (to) and hear</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little and few</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little and small</td>
<td>10.2 309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>live and leave</td>
<td>186.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lone and alone</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lonely</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long: a long way and far</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>position 10.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long and for a long time</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>longer and longest (pronunciation)</td>
<td>84.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no longer, not any longer</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prepositions</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look, watch and see</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look after and look for</td>
<td>299.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look forward, hope etc</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>look forward to . . . -ing</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loose and lose</td>
<td>299.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lot: a lot, much and many</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lots with comparatives</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loud</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love: + -ing or infinitive</td>
<td>182.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no progressive form</td>
<td>225.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love (tennis)</td>
<td>227.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lovely</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luggage (uncountable)</td>
<td>92.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ly</td>
<td>8.327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>position of adverbs</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>madam</td>
<td>211.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mainly</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make: + infinitive without to</td>
<td>179.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ object + adjective</td>
<td>355.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ object + noun</td>
<td>355.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with two objects</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>make and do</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male and masculine</td>
<td>299.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manage + infinitive</td>
<td>176.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manner (adverbs)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>position 14.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>many: as many as</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>many (of)</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>many and a lot etc</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marriage to</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>married to</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marry</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no preposition</td>
<td>256.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masculine and male</td>
<td>299.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masculine words</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mathematics (singular)</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matter: no progressive form</td>
<td>225.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>may and might</td>
<td>198–200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maybe: position</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me and I</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meals: what to say</td>
<td>313.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mean: I mean</td>
<td>97.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ infinitive</td>
<td>176.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no progressive form</td>
<td>225.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>measies (singular)</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>measurements</td>
<td>227.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>might</td>
<td>198–200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with if</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>million(s)</td>
<td>227.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mind</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. . . -ing</td>
<td>180.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mind you</td>
<td>97.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miss . . . -ing</td>
<td>180.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modal auxiliary verbs</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see also can, could, may, might, must, will, would, shall, should, ought, dare, need</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>money</td>
<td>227.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncountable</td>
<td>92.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>monthly</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more: with comparatives</td>
<td>84.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more (of)</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no more, not any more etc</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than one + singular</td>
<td>306.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most (of)</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>most with superlatives</td>
<td>84.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mostly: position</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr etc: no full stop</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr, Mrs. Miss and Ms</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much: as much as</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with comparatives</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much (of)</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much and a lot etc</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>much too</td>
<td>348.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>must</td>
<td>207–210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>must and have to</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>must, ought and should</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>myself</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>names and titles</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>names on envelopes</td>
<td>192.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Index

nationality words 212
nearest and next 219
nearly, position 14.5
nearly and almost 27
need 213
+ infinitive 176.2, 176.3
...ing 180.4
no progressive form 225.2
needn't, don't need to, mustn't etc 209
negative infinitive 175.1
negative questions 214
exclamations 120.3
not used in polite requests 286.4
negative structures 215
neither (adverb): position 14.3
word order 184.3
neither (of), determiner 216
neither . . . nor . . . 218
neither, nor and not . . . either 217
never 215.5
position 14.2
with present perfect 243.4
never . . . any 314.3
news (singular uncountable) 92.3, 304
next: position 9.3, 14.1
no preposition 256.2
next and nearest 219
next and the next 220
nice + infinitive 176.4
nice to 254
night, afternoon and evening 18
nil 227.3
no + comparatives 35, 86
no and none 221
no and not 222
no and not a/not any 223
no and yes (answers to negative questions) 214
no different/good/use 35
no longer, not any longer, no more and
not any more 224
no more, not any more, no longer and not
any longer 224
no thank you 249.3
nobody 223.2
nobody + they, them, their 307
none and no 221
no-one 223.2
no-one + they, them, their 307
non-progressive forms 225
nor: position 14.3
word order 184.3
nor, neither and not . . . either 217
normally, position 14.2
not 215
+ hope, believe etc 311
not and no 222
not a/not any and no 223
not any longer, no longer, no more and
not any more 224
not any more, no more, no longer and not
any longer 224
not as . . . as and not so . . . as 46.3
not at all 249.4
not . . . either, neither and nor 217
nothing 223.2
notice + infinitive without to 179.2
nought 227.3
noun + noun 226
nowhere 223.2
number, a number of + plural 305.3
numbers 227
object forms 331
obviously: position 14.4
occasionally: position 14.2
offer + infinitive 176.2
with two objects 356
often: position 14.2
old; position 10.4
the old 11.3
older, oldest, elder, eldest 10.2, 299.5
on, left out in time expressions 256.2, 256.3
on, at and in: place 54
time 55
on the other hand 97.4
on the radio 255
on the way and in the way 357.3
on time and in time 255
on TV 255
once 228
one: no preposition 256.2
one and a in numbers 227.8
one and you 229
one and a half 149
one another and each other 105
one day and once 228
one of my . . . 306.3
one(s) substitute word 230
only: position 14.3, 14.11
word order 184.5
or + infinitive without to 179.4
words left out 108.2
or else 109.3
order + object + infinitive 176.3
order of adjectives 9
other(s) 231
ought 232
ought, should and must 295
ourselves 276
over and above 3
over and across 4
owe, no progressive form 225.2
with two objects 356
own 233
no progressive form 225.2
paint + object + adjective 355.1
pardon, excuse me and sorry 121
participle and gerund 180.1
participles 234–236
party, position 14.5
pass with two objects 356
passive 237–238
infinitive 175.4
structures 237
verbs forms 238
past continuous (progressive) tense 242
past participle 234
past perfect: with after 15.3
with if 165
with if only 167
with wish 367
with would rather 370
past perfect tenses 245
past progressive tense 242
past simple tense 241
past tense: with conditional meaning 343.1
with present or future meaning 239
past tenses and past time 240–246
pay with two objects 356
pay for 254
+ object + infinitive 132.4
perfect infinitive 175.3
perfect tenses with first time etc 246
perhaps, position 14.4
people (plural) 303.2
-person (chairperson etc) 141.3
personal pronouns 247
persuade + object + infinitive 176.3
phone numbers 227.4
phrasal verbs 259
play with can 81
play and act 248
play and game 248
please 249
no progressive form 225.2
pleased, + infinitive 176.4
prepositions 254
plenty 205.3
plural and singular 301–307
pm 342.2
police (plural) 303.2
Polish 212
polite requests 286
polite to 254
politeness: use of past tense 239.3
politics (singular) 304
poor, the poor 11.3
Portuguese 212
possess, no progressive form 225.2
possessive 's 250, 251
possessives: with determiners 252
my, mine etc 253
in time expressions 227.12
position of adjectives 10
position of adverbs: details 14
general 13
practically, position 14.5
practise . . . -ing 180.3
prefer + infinitive 176.2, 176.3
+ -ing or infinitive 182.11
no progressive form 225.2
prepare + infinitive 176.2
preposition + -ing 180.5
prepositional verbs 259
prepositions 254–259
and adverb particles 258
at the end of clauses 257
expressions without prepositions 256
see also above, across, at etc
present and present perfect 244.5
present participles 234
present perfect: with after 15.3
difference between simple and progressive 244.4
and present 244.5
progressive 244
simple 243
present perfect tenses 243, 244, 246
present progressive: future use 135
present progressive and simple present tenses: differences 262.4
present progressive (continuous) tense 262
present simple tense 261
present tense with future meaning 343.1
present tenses 260–262
presently and at present 299.12
pretend + infinitive 176.2
pretty, fairly, quite and rather 124
prevent . . . from 254
price and prize 299.13
principal and principle 299.14
prize and price 299.13
probably, position 14.4
Professor 211.3
progress (uncountable) 92.3
progressive forms: verbs not used in progressive forms 225
progressive infinitive 175.2
progressive tenses with always 263
promise: + infinitive 176.2
  with two objects 356
pronouns 247
pronunciation and spelling 329
pronunciation of plurals 302
proof of 254
punctuation 264–269
put off . . . -ing 180.3

question tags 273
  after imperatives 170.3
questions 270–273
  reported 284
quiet and quite 299.15
quite 274
  position 14.5
quite, fairly, rather and pretty 124
quite and quiet 299.15
quotation marks ("...") 268
rabies (singular) 304
raise and rise 186.2
rarely 215.5
  position 14.2
rather: with comparatives 86
  position 14.5
  would rather 370
rather, fairly, quite and pretty 124
read with two objects 356
realize: no progressive form 225.2
really 275
  for emphasis 110.2
  position 14.4, 14.11
reason for 254
reckon so, not 311
recognize: no progressive form 225.2
red with anger 254
reflexive pronouns 276
regret + -ing or infinitive 182.4
relative pronouns 89.4, 277–280
remain 91
remember: with can 81
  + -ing or infinitive 182.1
  no progressive form 225.2
remind 281
  + object + infinitive 176.3
remind of 254
reply questions 272
reported speech 282–285
requests 286
research (uncountable) 92.3
responsible/responsibility for 254
retired 235.3
rich: the rich 11.3
right (adverb): position 14.11
rise and raise 186.2
risk . . . -ing 180.3
road and street 287
round, around and about 37
rubbish (uncountable) 92.3
rude to 254
run into 254
's 250, 251
same 288
say and tell 289
scarcely, position 14.5
Scotch, Scots and Scottish 212
search (prepositions) 254
see 290
  with can 81
  + infinitive without to 179.2
  + -ing form or infinitive 182.6
  no progressive form 225.2
see, look and watch 196
see you 313.2
seem 91, 291
  + infinitive 176.2
  no progressive form 225.2
seldom 215.5
  position 14.2
-self 276
semi-colon (;) 269
send with two objects 356
sensible and sensitive 299.16
shade and shadow 299.17
shall 292
  after how, what etc 177.2
shall and will 136
shall I/we and will I/we 292.2
share between, among 30.3
she 247
  for cars, boats, countries etc 141.1
shocked: prepositions 254
should 294–298
  after how, what etc 177.2
  (if I were you) I should . . . 298
  after in case 172.1
  after why and how 297
should, ought and must 295
should and would 296
should/would (conditional) 88
short answers 293
shout: prepositions 254
show with two objects 356
shut and close 82
sick and ill 10.3, 169
sick, the sick 11.3
silly 8.1
similar words 299
simple past tense 241
simple present tense 261
  future use 138
simple present and present progressive
tenses: differences 262.4
since (conjunction): with present
  perfect 243.4
tenses 300
since, as and because 47
since and for 244.3
since, for, from ago and before 133
  singular and plural 301–307
    plurals used as adjectives
    without -s 227.9, 227.11, 227.12
sir 211.3
sleep: what to say 313.9
sleeping and asleep 10.3
slow(ly) 308
small and little 10.2, 309
smell 310
  with can 81
    no progressive form 225.2
smile at 254
so: for emphasis 110.2
  with hope, believe etc 311
  not so... as 46.3
    word order 184.3
so and such 334
so am I, so do I etc 312
so as to 178
'social' language 313
some: no preposition 256.2
some and any 314–317
some time and sometimes 299.18
somebody and anybody 317
somebody + they/ them/ their 307
someone + they/ them/ their 307
something and anything 317
sometimes: position 14.2
sometimes and some time 299.18
soon: position 14.8
sorry: + -ing or infinitive 182.9
  prepositions 254
sorry, excuse me and pardon
  121
sort of 97.8
  position 14.5
sound 318
  no progressive form 225.2
spaghetti (uncountable) 92.3
Spanish 212
speak with can 81
spelling 319–329
  of plurals 301
spend time/money... -ing 180.3
stand: can't stand... -ing 180.3
start: + infinitive 176.2
  + -ing or infinitive 180.3, 182.11
start and begin 64
stay 91
stay and 32.2
still 97.4
  position 14.8
still, yet and already 330
stop + -ing or infinitive 182.2
street and road 287
strong and weak forms 358
stronger, strongest (pronunciation) 84.1
subject and object forms 331
subjunctive 332
such: for emphasis 110.2
such and so 334
suffer from 254
suggest 333
suggesting... -ing 180.3
Sunday, Monday etc: no preposition 256.3
superlatives 84–87
  without nouns 11.2
suppose: I suppose 97.11
  negative structures 215.7
  no progressive form 225.2
suppose so, not 311
sure + -ing or infinitive 182.10
surely 335
surprise: no progressive form 225.2
surprised at/ by 254
surprised + infinitive 176.4
Swedish 212
Swiss 212
sympathetic 336
tag questions 273
take 337, 338
  with two objects 356
take and bring 71
take part in 254
take (time) for + object + infinitive 132.4
talking about... 97.2
tall, big, large and great 65
tall and high 339
taste 340
  with can 81
    no progressive form 225.2
teach + object + infinitive 176.3
team with plural verb 305
telephone numbers 227.4
telephoning 341
tell: + object + infinitive 176.3
  with two objects 356
tell and say 289
telling the time 342
tenses: see future, past tenses,
Index

present tenses 343

tenses in subordinate clauses 343

terribly: position 14.11

than: after comparatives 85.2
+ infinitive without to 179.4
with object forms 331.4
words left out 108.4

thank God 249.3
thank you 249
thanks 249, 313.12
that (relative) 89.4, 277, 280
omission 282.2, 344

that and this 347
on telephone 341.4

that and what (relatives) 278.2

that’s all right 249.4

the 38–45
+ adjective (the blind etc) 11.3
with comparatives 85.3
with superlatives 85.6

the same 288

their, they, them referring to singular
word 307

them 247
them and they 331

them, they, their referring to singular
word 307

themselves 276
then: position 14.1
there: position 14.7
word order 185.1

there and here 159

there are . . . of . . . 227.13

there is 345

they 247

they and them 331

they, their referring to singular
word 307

think 346

negative structures 215.7
prepositions 254
no progressive form 225.2

think so, not 311

this: no preposition 256.2
this and that 347

on telephone: 341.4

though and although 29

thought of 254

thousand(s) 227.9

through and across 5

throw: prepositions 254

thunder (uncountable) 92.3

till and until 352.4

time: it’s time 189
time: telling the time 342

tiring and tired 235.2
titles 211
to . . . -ing 181
to instead of whole infinitive 108.5
to and until 352
today: position 14.8
tomorrow: no prepositions 256.2
too 348

position 14.3
too, also and as well 28
too and too much 348.3
too and very 348.4
toothache (uncountable) 92.3

travel, journey and trip 92.3, 349

trip, journey and travel 92.3, 349

try + -ing or infinitive 182.7

try and 32.1

Turkish 212

turn 91

typical of 254

ugly 8.1

uncountable nouns 92

understand: with can 81

. . . -ing 180.3

no progressive form 225.2

unemployed: the unemployed 11.3

United Kingdom, Britain etc 72

unless and if not 350

unlikely 8.1

until and by 351

until and till 352.4

until and to 352

us 247

us and we 331

use: it’s no use . . . -ing 180.6

used to + infinitive 353

. . . -ing 354

usually: position 14.2

verb: forms (active) 6

with object complements 355

with two objects 356.1

very. . . indeed 174

very and too 348.4

very much with comparatives 86

visits: what to say 313.8

wait, expect, hope etc 122

wait and see 32.1

wait for + object + infinitive 132.4

want: + infinitive 176.2, 176.3

. . . -ing 180.4

+ object + infinitive 176.3

no progressive form 225.2

want and will 366.6

want, wish, hope etc 122
watch: + infinitive without to 179.2
         + -ing form or infinitive 182.6
watch, look and see 196
way 357
         expressions without preposition 256.7
we 247
we and us 331
weak and strong forms 358
weekly 8.2
         position 14.8
weigh: no progressive form 225.2
well 97.9, 97.10
well (adjective) 359.2
well (adverb) 359.1
         position 14.6
well and healthy 10.3
Welsh 212
were instead of was 165, 332.2, 367
what and that (relatives) 278.2
what and which (relatives) 278.3
what: emphatic structures 111
         exclamations 120.2
         + infinitive 177
what (relative) 277, 278
what and that (relatives) 278.2
what and which (relatives) 278.3
what ever 364
what . . . like and how 163
what time (no preposition) 256.5
what, who and which: question words 363
whatever 365
when (relative) 277.4
when, as and while 52
when and if 360
when ever 364
whenever 365
where (relative) 277.4
where + infinitive 177
where ever 364
wherever 365
whether and if 361
whether in reported questions 284.2
whether . . . or . . . 362
which (relative) 89.4, 277, 280
which and what (relative) 278.3
which, what and who: question words 363
whichever 365
while, as and when 52
who (relative) 89.4, 277, 280
who + infinitive 177
who, what and which: question words 363
who and whom 331
who ever 364
whoever 365
whole and all 25
whom (relative) 277, 280
whom and who 331
whose (interrogative) 253.3
whose (relative) 279
why ever 364
why (not) + infinitive without to 179.3
why should . . . 297
wide 12.3
wide and broad 74
will 366
         with if 164.4
will and shall 136, 137
will and want 366.6
wish 367
         + infinitive 176.2, 176.3
         no progressive form 225.2
wish, want, hope etc 122
with in participle clauses 236.4
without any 314.3
wonder: I wonder if you could . . . 286.1
word order: conjunctions 89
         after here, there 14.7
         order of adjectives 9
         position of adjectives 10
         position of adverbs 13
         position of adverbs (details) 14
         prepositions at the end of clauses 257
         questions 270
         spoken questions 271
         verb before subject 184, 185
work (uncountable) 92.3
worse and worst 84.2
worth . . . -ing 368
would 369
would/should (conditional) 88
would and should 296
would like 88.2d, 182.11
would prefer 88.2d
would rather 370
write with two objects 356
wrong with 254
yearly 8.2
yes and no: answers to negative
         questions 214
yesterday: no preposition 256.2
yet 97.4
         with present perfect 243.4
yet, ever and already 116.6
yet, still and already 330
you 247
you and one 229
young: the young 11.3
younger, youngest: pronunciation 84.1
you’re welcome 249.4
yourself, yourselves 276
zero 227.3
Basic English Usage

For students of English at a lower intermediate level and upwards, this reference guide will serve as a comprehensive and reliable study companion. Its 370 short articles clearly explain those points of English grammar and vocabulary that most frequently cause difficulty.

- simple explanations
- numerous examples of acceptable usage and common mistakes
- descriptions of formal and informal language
- contrasts between British and American English
- glossary of technical terms
- complete list of entries
- full index
- clear two-colour design

Basic English Usage is a shortened and simplified version of Michael Swan’s popular and authoritative Practical English Usage.

Also published

Basic English Usage: Exercises
by Jennifer Seidl and Michael Swan

230 exercises which practise the most important topics in Basic English Usage.