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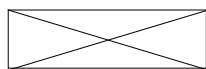


English

1st Class

أستاذة المادة: م. م منى عبد الحسين

How to Hear English Everywhere



Two simple definitions

- **to hear:** to receive sound with the ears
- **to listen:** to try to hear

You are very good at languages. That's obvious, because you already speak one language very well - your own! And if you can learn and speak one language well, then you can certainly learn and speak one or more other languages.

But did you ever ask yourself: "How did I learn my own language?" In fact, you never really "learned" it at all - you just started speaking it. One day, when you were about two or three years old, you started speaking your language. A few words at first, not full sentences. But you spoke. And very soon you made progress without even thinking about it. It was like magic!

But it wasn't magic. It was the result of **hearing**. For two to three years before you spoke, you heard people speaking your language all day, and maybe all night. **You heard people speaking your language.** Maybe you listened to people, but more importantly you **heard** them. Then, as if by magic, you started to speak. All that hearing was necessary for you to start speaking. For two to three years words went IN to your head. Then words came OUT of your head! That is why hearing (and listening to) English as much as possible is so important to you now. The more English you put in, the more you'll get out!

So how can you hear a lot of English when you're not in an English-speaking country or family? Fortunately, there are many ways of hearing English in almost all countries of the world.

Vocabulary

It is more fun to talk with someone who doesn't use long, difficult words but rather short, easy words like "What about lunch?"

English Alphabet (a, b, c)

English Phonetic Spelling (*alpha, bravo, charlie*)

Useful Word Lists

- **Phrasal Verbs List** Phrasal Verbs Quiz
- **Prepositions List** (*at, by, concerning*)
- **Interjections List** (*oh!, um, ah!*)
- **Regular Verbs List** (*work, worked, worked*)
- **Irregular Verbs List** (*go, went, gone*)

- **100 Commonest English Words** (*the, be, to*)

Say or Tell?

Say and tell have similar meanings. They both mean to communicate verbally with someone.

But we often use them differently.

The simple way to think of say and tell is:

- **You say something**
- **You tell someone something**

You say something	You tell someone something
Ram said that he was tired.	Ram told Jane that he was tired.
Anthony says you have a new job.	Anthony tells me you have a new job.
Tara said: "I love you."	Tara told John that she loved him.

But, of course, it is not always so easy. Here are a few rules to help you.

Personal object

We usually follow tell with a personal object (the person that we are speaking to).

We usually use say without a personal object:

- **She told me that she loved John.**
- **She said that she loved John.**
- **He told everybody that he had to leave.**
- **He said that he had to leave.**

Say "to someone"

With say, we sometimes use "to someone":

- **He said to me that he was tired.**
- **Tara said to Ram that he had done very well.**
- **Anthony said to her, "I hope you come soon."**
- **"I'd like to sleep," she said to him quietly.**

Direct speech

We can use say with direct speech. We use tell only with direct speech that is an instruction

or information:

- **Amanda said, "Hello John. How are you?"**
- **"That's great" she said.**
- **He told her: "Open the door quietly."**

- She told me, "I have never been to England."

We can use say with direct questions, but we cannot use tell:

- She said: "Do you love me?"
- The policeman said to the prisoner, "Where were you at 8pm?"

Reported speech

We can use say and tell to talk about reported information:

- She said that it was raining.
- She told me that she would call at 2pm.

We cannot use say or tell to talk about reported questions. We must use ask (or a similar verb):

- She asked if I had ever been there.
- They asked what I wanted to eat.
- She asked where he lived.
- He asked if she wanted to go home.

Orders, advice

We use tell + object + infinitive for orders or advice:

- She told him to sit down.
- They told me not to wait.
- Tell Neil to have a holiday and forget her.

Phrases

Here are a few fixed phrases with tell. We cannot use say with these phrases:

- tell (someone) a story
- tell (someone) a lie
- tell (someone) the truth
- tell the future (= to know what the future will bring)
- tell the time (= know how to read a clock)

Right and wrong

Read these examples of correct and incorrect usage:

We cannot...	These are NOT possible...	These are possible...
say someone to do something	Tara said Jo to go away.	Tara told Jo to go away.
say someone something	Panita said me that she was hungry.	Panita told me that she was hungry.
tell something	He told that he likes coffee.	He said that he likes coffee.

tell to someone	Tookta told to me that she was coming.	Tookta told me that she was coming.
		Tookta said to me that she was coming.
say a lie	Siriluck always says lies.	Siriluck always tells lies.
tell somebody "direct speech" (except instructions and information)	Ram told Nok: "Let's turn on the TV."	Ram said to Nok: "Let's turn on the TV."
		(Ram told Nok, "Turn on the TV.")
		(Ram told Nok: "I was born in 1985.")
say or tell a reported question	She said if I wanted to come.	She asked if I wanted to come.
	Tookta told what I wanted to do.	Took asked what I wanted to do.

Say o

Doctor's Diagnosis

Physician

- Your test results have come in.
- I'm afraid the prognosis isn't good.
- You have a long road to recovery.
- We have several options to discuss.
- The blood test came back negative.
- The transfusion was a success.
- It looks like you're ready to go home.
- I'd like to keep you here over night.
- We'll know more in a few days.
- You're not in the clear yet.
- We've ruled out diabetes.
- I'm hoping to get to the bottom of this soon.

Patient

- I don't understand what this means.
- Am I going to need surgery?
- Is it good news or bad?
- When will the tests results come in?
- How long do I have to stay in the hospital?
- What is the success rate?
- Are they going to run more tests?
- Is this a common problem for people my age?
- I'd like to discuss other options.
- I'm going to get a second opinion.

Sample Conversation

- Doctor:** Hi Jessica. How are you feeling today?
- Patient:** A bit better.
- Doctor:** That's good to hear. Are you still feeling nauseous?
- Patient:** No, I haven't felt sick to my stomach since you switched my medication.
- Doctor:** Great. Say, your test results came in this morning.
- Patient:** It's about time. Is it good news or bad?
- Doctor:** I guess it's a bit of both. Which do you want first?
- Patient:** Let's get the bad news over with.
- Doctor:** Okay. It looks like you're going to need surgery to remove the tumour from your leg. After the operation you're going to have to stay off your feet for at least three weeks. That means no soccer.
- Patient:** I was afraid you were going to say that.
- Doctor:** Now for the good news. The biopsy shows that the tumour is benign, which means it's not cancerous. We're going to take it out anyway just to be on the safe side.
- Patient:** Wow, that's a load off my mind. Thanks Doctor.
- Doctor:** Don't get too excited. We still need to get to the bottom of all of this weight loss.
- Patient:** I've probably just been so worried about this stupid lump.
- Doctor:** These things often are stress related, but we're still going to do a few blood tests just to rule a few things out.
- Patient:** Things like what? Cancer?
- Doctor:** Actually, I'm thinking more along the lines of a food allergy.

Reading is the 3rd of the four language

skills:

1. Listening
2. Speaking
3. Reading
4. Writing

English Writing

What is written without effort is read without pleasure.

Writing is the 4th of the four language skills, and usually the one that we learn last:

1- Listening

2-Speaking

3-Reading

4-Writing

The English Alphabet (Aa Bb Cc...)

Here is the English alphabet from Aa to Zz, in large and small letters.

Use of Large Letters (Capitals)

In English, we do not use capital letters very much. It is not correct or even polite to use a lot of capital letters in English. But there are times when capitals are important.

Spelling Rules

The following rules can help you to decode the mysteries of English spelling. But remember, even the best rules have their exceptions. This section includes spelling variations in English and American English.

English Punctuation

Punctuation is the system of symbols (, , ! - : etc) that we use to separate sentences and parts of sentences, and to make their meaning clear. Here are the punctuation marks that we use in English.

Plagiarism - and how to avoid it!

Plagiarism is an illegal form of copying. It means taking another person's work (without asking) and calling it your own. Plagiarism is against the law in most nations.

Dictionary or Thesaurus?

What's the difference between a dictionary and a thesaurus? When do we use

a dictionary and when do we use a thesaurus?

Dictionary

A **dictionary** tells you what a word means. It gives you a "definition" for each word. When you want to know what a word means, you look in a dictionary.

A dictionary lists **definitions** or **meanings**.

Thesaurus

A **thesaurus** gives you words that mean the same as, or nearly the same as, another word. When you can't find the exact word you want, you look in a thesaurus.

A thesaurus lists **synonyms** and **similar words**.

The plural of "thesaurus" is "thesauri" or "thesauruses".

Synonyms and Antonyms

Synonym

A **synonym** is a word that means exactly the same as, or very nearly the same as, another word in the same language.

For example, "close" is a synonym of "shut".

You can find synonyms in a [thesaurus](#).

Antonym

An **antonym** is a word that means the opposite of another word.

For example "good" and "bad" are antonyms.

You can find antonyms in a dictionary of antonyms.

Phonetic alphabet

Vowels and diphthongs (double vowels)

i:	seat /si:t/, feel /fi:l/	ɜ:	turn /tɜ:n
ɪ	sit /sɪt/, in /ɪn/	ə	another /
e	set /set/, any /'eni/	eɪ	take /teɪk
æ	sat /sæt/, match /mætʃ/	aɪ	mine /maɪ
ɑ:	march /mɑ:tʃ/, after /'ɑ:ftə(r)/	ɔɪ	oil /ɔɪl/, b
ɒ	pot /pɒt/, gone /gɒn/	əʊ	no /nəʊ/,
ɔ:	port /pɔ:t/, law /lɔ:/	aʊ	house /haʊ
ʊ	good /gʊd/, could /kʊd/	ɪə	hear /hɪə
u:	food /fu:d/, group /gru:p/	eə	where /weə
ʌ	much /mʌtʃ/, front /frʌnt/	ʊə	tour /tuə(

Consonants

p	pull /pʊl/, cup /kʌp/	tʃ	cheap /tʃ
b	bull /bʊl/, rob /rɒb/	dʒ	jail /dʒeɪl
f	ferry /'ferɪ/, cough /kɒf/	k	king /kɪŋ/
v	very /'veri/, live /lɪv/	g	go /gəʊ/,
θ	think /θɪŋk/, bath /bɑ:θ/	m	my /maɪ/
ð	though /ðəʊ/, with /wɪð/	n	no /nəʊ/,
t	take /teɪk/, set /set/	ŋ	sing /sɪŋ/
d	day /deɪ/, red /red/	l	love /lʌv/
s	sing /sɪŋ/, rice /raɪs/	r	round /raʊ
z	zoo /zu:/, days /deɪz/	w	well /wel/
ʃ	show /ʃəʊ/, wish /wɪʃ/	j	young /jʌ
ʒ	pleasure /'pleɪzə(r)/	h	house /haʊ

' shows which part of a word is stressed. Example

Prefixes

With the meaning 'not'

Prefixes (**un-**, **in-**, **il-**, **ir-**, and **dis-**) are often used to give adjectives (and some verb nouns) a negative meaning. Here are common examples:

happy	un happy	like (v)	dis like (v)
possible	im possible	legal	il legal (= against the law)
correct	in correct	regular	ir regular, e.g. irregular verbs

un- is used with many different words, e.g. **unfriendly**, **unable**, **unemployed** (= without job), **untidy** (= not in order; **in a mess**)

im- is used before some words beginning with **m** or **p**, e.g. **impolite** (= **rude**), **impatient** (somebody who is **impatient** wants things to happen now; they cannot wait for)

il- is used before some words beginning with **l**, e.g. **illegible** (= cannot be read because writing is very bad)

ir- is only used before some words beginning with **r**, e.g. **irresponsible**

dis- is used before some adjectives, e.g. **dishonest**, and a few verbs, e.g. **dislike**, **disappear**

in- is used before a limited number of words, e.g. **invisible** (= cannot be seen)

Note: A prefix does not normally change word stress, e.g. happy/unhappy; possible/impossible. But the stress may change if you want to emphasise the negative or opposite meaning.

A: Was he happy about the change?

B: No, he was very unhappy about it.

Verb prefixes: un- and dis-

These prefixes have two meanings: they can have a negative meaning (as above), but they can also mean 'the opposite of an action' or 'to reverse an action'. This meaning is used with certain verbs.

I **locked** the door when I left, but I lost the key, so I couldn't **unlock** it when I got home. I had to **pack** my suitcase (= put everything in it) very quickly, so when I **unpacked** (took everything out) at the hotel, most of my clothes looked terrible.

The plane **appeared** in the sky, then suddenly **disappeared** behind a cloud.

In the morning you **get dressed** (= put on your clothes); when you go to bed you **get undressed** (= take off your clothes).

Other verb prefixes with specific meanings

re- (= again) My homework was terrible, so I had to **redo** it.

The shop closed down but will **reopen** next month.

I failed my exam but I can **retake** (or **redo/resit**) it next year.

over- (= too much) I think my boss is **overdoing** it at the moment. (= working too hard; also **overwork**)

I went to bed very late and I **overslept** (= slept too long) this morning.

The shop assistant **overcharged** me. (= asked me for too much money)

mis- (= badly or incorrectly) I'm afraid I **misunderstood** what he said.

Two of the students **misread** the first question.

Telling the Time

Asking the time

Here are some phrases you can use when you want to know the time:

- What's the time?
- What time is it?
- Have you got the right time?
- What time do you make it?

Telling the time

To tell someone what the time is, we can say "The time is..." or, more usually, "It's...". Here is a typical dialogue:

Question: What's the time, please?

Answer: It's three o'clock.

The chart below shows you two different ways to tell someone what the time is.

	more formal	less formal
	It's...	It's...
3.00	three o'clock	three
3.02	<i>just gone three o'clock</i>	three oh two
3.03	three <i>minutes</i> past three	three oh three
3.05	five past three	three oh five
3.09	nine <i>minutes</i> past three	three oh nine
3.10	ten past three	three ten
3.15	a quarter past three	three fifteen
3.20	twenty past three	three twenty
3.21	twenty-one <i>minutes</i> past three	three twenty-one
3.25	twenty-five past three	three twenty-five
3.30	half past three	three thirty
3.35	twenty-five to four	three thirty-five
3.40	twenty to four	three forty
3.45	a quarter to four	three forty-five
3.50	ten to four	three fifty
3.55	five to four	three fifty-five
3.57	three <i>minutes</i> to four	three fifty-seven
3.58	<i>nearly four o'clock</i>	three fifty-eight
4.00	four o'clock	

Day and Night

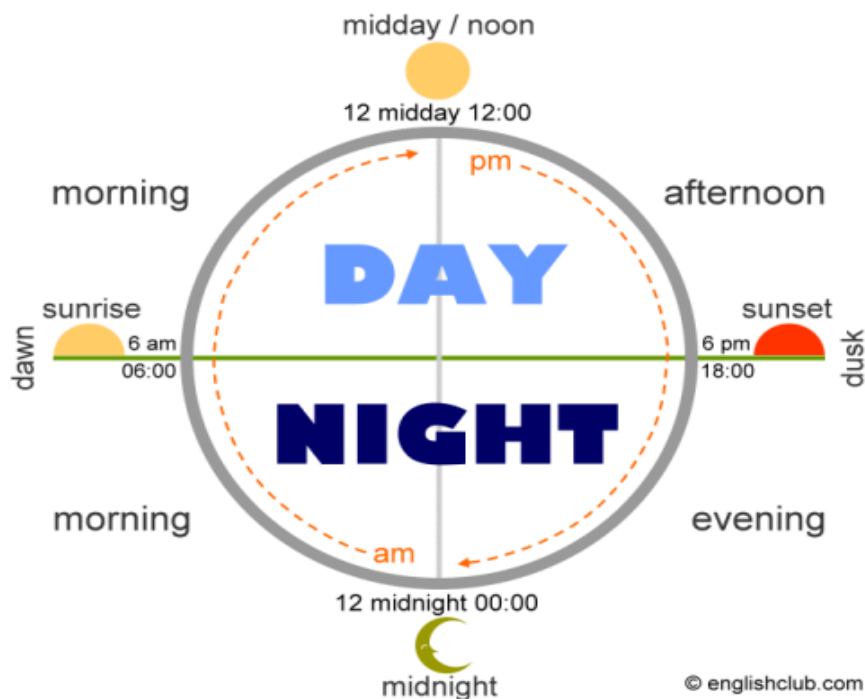
There are 24 hours in a day. The day is divided into "day(time)" and "night(-time)". Daytime is from sunrise (this varies, but we can say approximately 6am) to sunset (we can say approximately 6pm). Night-time is from sunset to sunrise.

Every day starts precisely at midnight. AM (Ante-Meridiem = before noon) starts **just after** midnight.

PM (Post-Meridiem=after noon) starts **just after** midday. This means that 12am and 12pm have no meaning.

This diagram shows the cycle of a 24-hour day and the words we use to describe its parts.

The day starts at midnight (at the bottom of the diagram).



- The word **day** can have two meanings:
1. the 24 hours between one midnight and the next
 2. the time between sunrise and sunset (as distinct from **night**)

Days of the Week

Notice that "weekdays" and "days of the week" are not the same. "Days of the week" are all 7 days from Monday to Sunday. "Weekdays" are only the 5 days from Monday to Friday. The "weekend" is Saturday and Sunday.

	Day	Abbreviation	
weekdays	Monday	Mon.	Mo.
	Tuesday	Tue.	Tu.
	Wednesday	Wed.	We.
	Thursday	Thu.	Th.
	Friday	Fri.	Fr.
weekend	Saturday	Sat.	Sa.
	Sunday	Sun.	Su.

Months of the Year

The list below shows the months of the year used in English-speaking countries and many other parts of the world. The list shows the order of the months, starting from January (month 1).

The abbreviations or short forms shown are the most common, but other abbreviations are possible, for example: Ja./Fe./Ma. or J./F./M.

The days column shows the number of days in the month. All months have 30 or 31 days, except for February which has 28 days (29 in a leap year).

The seasons are approximate and depend on latitude. Some parts of the world have only three seasons. The seasons shown here are for the North Temperate Zone (for example North America). In the southern hemisphere, the seasons are reversed.

Every fourth year, the month of February has 29 days instead of 28. This year is called a "leap year" and the 29th of February is a "leap day". A leap year has 366 days instead of the normal 365.

	Month	Short Form	Days	Season
1	January	Jan.	31	Winter
2	February	Feb.	28/29	
3	March	Mar.	31	Spring
4	April	Apr.	30	
5	May	May	31	
6	June	Jun.	30	Summer

7	July	Jul.	31	
8	August	Aug.	31	
9	September	Sep.	30	Autumn
10	October	Oct.	31	
11	November	Nov.	30	
12	December	Dec.	31	Winter

Writing the Date

There are several different ways to write the date in English. They vary from formal to informal, and there are differences between British and American English. The following table shows some typical formats.

Format	British: Day-Month-Year	American: Month-Day-Year
A	the Fourteenth of March, 1999	March the Fourteenth, 1999
B	14th March 1999	March 14th, 1999
C	14 March 1999	March 14, 1999
D	14/3/1999	3/14/1999
E	14/3/99	3/14/99
F	14/03/99	03/14/99

Note: which format to use is a question of formality, politeness and personal choice. Generally, the longer formats, such as B or C, are more polite (since they show more respect for the reader). Shorter formats, such as D or E, are used in less formal situations, for example a memo, a letter between friends or an impersonal business letter. Format F is rather official and is typically seen on an invoice or an official or technical document. Format A is extremely formal and mainly used on printed items, for example a wedding invitation. The numerical formats may use a full stop (.) or hyphen (-) instead of a slash (/), for example: 14.3.1999 or 03-14-99

Vocabulary

Word <i>Part of speech</i>	Meaning	Example Sentence
absent <i>adj</i>	not present	The vice president is absent due to unforeseen circumstances.
accomplish <i>verb</i>	succeed in doing	We have a lot to accomplish today, so let's begin.

address <i>verb</i>	deal with; speak on	I hope we do not have to address this matter again in the future.
adjourn <i>verb</i>	close a meeting	If there are no further comments, we will adjourn the meeting here.
agenda <i>noun</i>	list of objectives to cover in a meeting	Please forward the agenda to anyone who is speaking at the meeting.
AGM <i>noun(abbr.)</i>	Annual (yearly) General Meeting	We always vote for a new chairperson at the AGM .
allocate <i>verb</i>	assign roles/tasks to certain people	I forgot to allocate someone to bring refreshments.
AOB <i>noun(abbr.)</i>	Any Other Business (unspecified item on agenda)	The last item on the agenda is AOB .
apologies <i>noun</i>	item on agenda announcing people who are absent; apologies for absence	Everyone is present today, so we can skip the apologies .
ballot <i>noun</i>	a type of vote, usually in writing and usually secret	Please fold your ballot in half before you place it in the box.
board of directors <i>noun</i>	group of elected members of an organization/company who meet to make decisions	The board of directors meets once a month to discuss the budget.
boardroom <i>noun</i>	a large meeting room, often has one long table and many chairs	The boardroom is reserved for a managers' meeting, so we'll have to meet in the lounge.
brainstorm <i>verb</i>	thinking to gather ideas	Let's take a few minutes and brainstorm some ways that we can cut costs.
casting vote <i>noun</i>	deciding vote (usually by the chairman) when the votes are otherwise equal	The role of treasurer was decided based on the chairman's casting vote .
chairperson/chair <i>noun</i>	the person who leads or presides at a meeting	As chair , it is my pleasure to introduce to you, Mr. Allan Davis.
clarification/verification <i>noun</i>	explanation/proof that something is true/understood	Before we address this matter, I'll need some clarification as to who was involved.
closing remarks <i>noun</i>	last thoughts spoken in a meeting (i.e. reminders, thank yous)	I just have a few closing remarks and then you will all be free to go.
collaborate <i>verb</i>	work together as a pair/group	The board fell apart because the members had difficulty collaborating .

commence <i>verb</i>	begin	We will commence as soon as the last person signs the attendance sheet.
comment <i>verb or noun</i>	express one's opinions or thoughts	If you have a comment , please raise your hand rather than speak out.
conference <i>noun</i>	formal meeting for discussion, esp. a regular one held by an organization	Before the conference there will be a private meeting for board members only.
conference call <i>noun</i>	telephone meeting between three or more people in different locations	Please make sure I have no interruptions while I'm on the conference call .
confidential <i>adjective</i>	private; not to be shared	Any financial information shared during this meeting should be kept confidential .
consensus <i>noun</i>	general agreement	If we cannot come to a consensus by the end of the meeting we will put it to a vote.
deadline <i>noun</i>	due date for completion	The deadline for buying tickets to the conference is May 25th.
designate <i>verb</i>	assign	If no one volunteers to take the minutes I will be forced to designate someone.
formality <i>noun</i>	a procedure (often unnecessary) that has to be followed due to a rule	Everyone knows who is going to be the next vice president, so this vote is really just a formality .
grievance <i>noun</i>	complaint	The first item on the agenda relates to a grievance reported by the interns.
guest speaker <i>noun</i>	person who joins the group in order to share information or deliver a speech	I am delighted to welcome our guest speaker Holly, who is going to be offering some sales pitch tips.
implement <i>verb</i>	make something happen; follow through	It's not a question of whether or not we're going to use this idea, it's whether or not we know how to implement it.
mandatory <i>adjective</i>	required	It is mandatory that all supervisors attend Friday's meeting.
minutes <i>noun</i>	a written record of everything said at a meeting	Before we begin with today's meeting, let's quickly review the minutes from last month.
motion <i>noun</i>	a suggestion put to a vote	The motion to extend store hours has been passed.

objectives <i>noun</i>	goals to accomplish	I'm pleased that we were able to cover all of the objectives today within the designated time.
opening remarks <i>noun</i>	chairperson or leader's first words at a meeting (i.e. welcome, introductions)	As I mentioned in my opening remarks , we have to clear this room before the end of the hour.
overhead projector <i>noun</i>	machine with a special light that projects a document onto a screen or wall so that all can see	I'm going to put a pie chart on the overhead projector so that everyone can visualize how our profits have declined.
participant <i>noun</i>	person who attends and joins in on an event	Can I have a show of hands of all of those who were participants in last year's conference?
proxy vote <i>noun</i>	a vote cast by one person for or in place of another	There must have been one proxy vote because I count twelve ballots but only eleven attendees.
punctual <i>adjective</i>	on time (not late)	Firstly, I want to thank you all for being punctual despite this early meeting.
recommend <i>verb</i>	suggest	I recommend that you sit closer to the front if you have trouble hearing.
show of hands <i>noun</i>	raised hands to express an opinion in a vote	From the show of hands it appears that everyone is in favour of taking a short break.
strategy <i>noun</i>	plan to make something work	We need to come up with a strategy that will allow us to have meetings less frequently.
unanimous <i>adj</i>	in complete agreement; united in opinion	The vote was unanimous to cut work hours on Fridays.
vote <i>verb or noun</i>	to express (the expression of) an opinion in a group by voice or hand etc	We need to vote for a new vice chairperson now that Jerry is retiring.
wrap up <i>verb</i>	finish	Let's wrap up here so that we can get back to our desks.

Telephone Terms

Here are some of the words and terms that we use to talk **about** telephoning.

answer	to say "hello" into the phone when it rings
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answering machine	something that you can record a message on if the person you are calling isn't home
busy signal	a beeping sound that tells the caller that the other person is already on the phone with someone else
call	a telephone conversation; to telephone
caller	the person who telephones
call back/phone back	to call someone who called you first
call display	a screen that shows you who is calling
cellular phone/cell phone	a telephone that you can take with you away from your house; mobile phone
cordless phone	a phone that is not attached to the wall (you can walk short distances with it at home or in the garden)
dial	to press the buttons on the phone
dial tone	the sound the phone makes when you pick it up
directory/phone book	a book that alphabetically lists local phone numbers of people and businesses
hang up	to put the receiver down and end a call
operator	a person who answers telephone-related questions when you dial "0"
pager	a small machine you wear that makes a noise (or vibrates) when someone wants you to call them
phone	a telephone; to telephone
phone booth/pay phone	a place where you can pay to use a telephone in public
pick up	to answer the phone
receiver	the piece on the phone that you speak into and listen from
ring	the sound a phone makes when somebody calls; to make that sound
ringer	the sound-piece that alerts a person that a call is coming through

Telephone Language

Here are some typical phrases that you can use in a telephone conversation.

<p>Answering the phone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello? (informal) • Thank you for calling Boyz Autobody. Jody speaking. How can I help you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctor's office.
<p>Introducing yourself</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hey George. It's Lisa calling. (informal) • Hello, this is Julie Madison calling. • Hi, it's Gerry from the dentist's office here. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is she.* • Speaking.* <p>*The person answering says this if the caller does not recognize their voice.</p>
<p>Asking to speak with someone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Fred in? (informal) • Is Jackson there, please? (informal) • Can I talk to your sister? (informal) • May I speak with Mr. Green, please? • Would the doctor be in/available?
<p>Connecting someone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just a sec. I'll get him. (informal) • Hang on one second. (informal) • Please hold and I'll put you through to his office. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One moment please. • All of our operators are busy at this time. Please hold for the next available person.
<p>Making special requests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you please repeat that? • Would you mind spelling that for me? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you speak up a little please? • Can you speak a little slower please. My English isn't very strong. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you call me back? I think we have a bad connection. • Can you please hold for a minute? I have another call.
<p>Taking a message for someone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sammy's not in. Who's this? (informal) • I'm sorry, Lisa's not here at the moment. Can I ask who's calling? • I'm afraid he's stepped out. Would you like to leave a message? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He's on lunch right now. Who's calling please? • He's busy right now. Can you call again later?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'll let him know you called. • I'll make sure she gets the message.
Leaving a message with someone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, can you tell him his wife called, please. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, that's okay, I'll call back later. • Yes, it's James from here. When do you expect her back in the office? • Thanks, could you ask him to call Brian when he gets in? • Do you have a pen handy. I don't think he has my number. • Thanks. My number is 222-3456, extension 12.
Confirming information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okay, I've got it all down. • Let me repeat that just to make sure. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you say 555 Charles St.? • You said your name was John, right? • I'll make sure he gets the message.
Listening to an answering machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello. You've reached 222-6789. Please leave a detailed message after the beep. Thank you. • Hi, this is Elizabeth. I'm sorry I'm not available to take your call at this time. Leave me a message and I'll get back to you as soon as I can. • Thank you for calling Dr. Mindin's office. Our hours are 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday. Please call back during these hours, or leave a message after the tone. If this is an emergency please call the hospital at 333-7896.
Leaving a message on an answering machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hey Mikako. It's Yuka. Call me! (informal) • Hello, this is Ricardo calling for Luke. Could you please return my call as soon as possible. My number is 334-5689. Thank you. • Hello Maxwell. This is Marina from the doctor's office calling. I just wanted to let you know that you're due for a check-up this month. Please give us a ring/buzz whenever it's convenient.
Finishing a conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well, I guess I better get going. Talk to you soon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks for calling. Bye for now. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have to let you go now. • I have another call coming through. I better run. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm afraid that's my other line. • I'll talk to you again soon. Bye.

English Parts of Speech

There are thousands of words in any language. But not all words have the same job. For example, some words express "action". Other words express a "thing". Other words "join" one word to another word. These are the "building blocks" of the language. Think of them like the parts of a house. When we want to build a house, we use concrete to make the foundations or base. We use bricks to make the walls. We use window frames to make the windows, and door frames to make the doorways. And we use cement to join them all together. Each part of the house has its own job. And when we want to build a sentence, we use the different types of word. Each type of word has its own job.

We can categorize English words into 8 basic types or classes. These classes are called "parts of speech".

It's quite important to recognize parts of speech. This helps you to analyze sentences and understand them. It also helps you to construct good sentences.

In this lesson, we have an overview of the eight parts of speech, followed by a quiz to check your understanding:

- [Parts of Speech Table](#)
- [Parts of Speech Examples](#)
- [Words with More than One Job](#)
- [Parts of Speech Quiz](#)

Parts of Speech Table

This is a summary of the 8 parts of speech*. You can find more detail if you click on each part of speech.

part of speech	function or "job"	example words	example sentences
Verb	action or state	(to) be, have, do, like, work, sing, can, must	EnglishClub.com is a web site. I like EnglishClub.com.
Noun	thing or person	pen, dog, work, music, town, London, teacher, John	This is my dog . He lives in my house . We live in London .
Adjective	describes a noun	a/an, the, 69, some, good, big, red, well, interesting	My dog is big . I like big dogs.
Adverb	describes a verb, adjective or adverb	quickly, silently, well, badly, very, really	My dog eats quickly . When he is very hungry, he eats really quickly.
Pronoun	replaces a noun	I, you, he, she, some	Tara is Indian. She is beautiful.
Preposition	links a noun to another word	to, at, after, on, but	We went to school on Monday.
Conjunction	joins clauses or sentences or words	and, but, when	I like dogs and I like cats. I like cats and dogs. I like dogs but I don't like cats.
Interjection	short exclamation, sometimes inserted into a sentence	oh!, ouch!, hi!, well	Ouch! That hurts! Hi! How are you? Well , I don't know.

* Some grammar sources categorize English into **9** or **10** parts of speech. At EnglishClub.com, we use the traditional categorization of **8** parts of speech. Examples of other categorizations are:

- Verbs may be treated as two different parts of speech:

- **Lexical Verbs** (*work, like, run*)
- **Auxiliary Verbs** (*be, have, must*)
- **Determiners** may be treated as a separate part of speech, instead of being categorized under Adjectives
- **Parts of Speech Examples**
- Here are some sentences made with different English parts of speech:

verb	noun	verb	noun	verb	verb
Stop!	John	works.	John	is	working.

•

pronoun	verb	noun	noun	verb	adjective	noun
She	loves	animals.	Animals	like	kind	people.

•

noun	verb	noun	adverb	noun	verb	adjective	noun
Tara	speaks	English	well.	Tara	speaks	good	English.

•

pronoun	verb	preposition	adjective	noun	adverb
She	ran	to	the	station	quickly.

•

pron.	verb	adj.	noun	conjunction	pron.	verb	pron.
She	likes	big	snakes	but	I	hate	them.

- Here is a sentence that contains every part of speech:

interjection	pron.	conj.	adj.	noun	verb	prep.	noun	adverb
Well,	she	and	young	John	walk	to	school	slowly.

Words with More than One Job

Many words in English can have more than one job, or be more than one part of speech. For example, "work" can be a verb and a noun; "but" can be a conjunction and a preposition; "well" can be an adjective, an adverb and an interjection. In addition, many nouns can act as adjectives.

To analyze the part of speech, ask yourself: "What **job** is this word doing in this sentence?"

In the table below you can see a few examples. Of course, there are more, even for some of the words in the table. In fact, if you look in a good dictionary you will see that the word **but** has six jobs to do:

- verb, noun, adverb, pronoun, preposition and conjunction!

word	part of speech	example
work	noun	My work is easy.

	verb	I work in London.
but	conjunction	John came but Mary didn't come.
	preposition	Everyone came but Mary.
well	adjective	Are you well ?
	adverb	She speaks well .
	interjection	Well! That's expensive!
afternoon	noun	We ate in the afternoon .
	noun acting as adjective	We had afternoon tea.

Weather

English speakers love to talk about the weather. It is a way of *breaking the ice* (starting a conversation).

People talk about the weather on the phone and in person. Friends and family talk about the weather before they

discuss what's new. Co-workers talk about the weather before starting a hard day of work. Even strangers discuss

the weather. Learn the proper vocabulary and expressions, and you will find it easy to start a conversation anytime and anywhere with anyone you meet!

Common questions and responses about Weather

What's it like out?	It's miserable out.
How's the weather?	It's ten below. (-10 degrees)
Do you have rain?	We haven't had a drop of rain for weeks.
What's the temperature there?	It's 22 degrees Celsius.
It's snowing here, what's it doing there?	It's pouring outside. (<i>raining heavily</i>)
Beautiful day, huh?	We couldn't ask for a better day than this.
What's the weather forecast?	They're calling for blue skies all week.

One common mistake learners make when talking about the weather is mixing up the noun, adjective and verb forms of weather words.

Example 2: *What's it like out?*

It is rain. **Incorrect**
 It is raining. **Correct**
 It is rainy. **Correct**

Example 3: *What's the weather like?*

It is sun. **Incorrect**
 It is sunny. **Correct**
 The sun is shining. **orrect**

Small Talk: Conversation Starters

<p>Talking about the weather</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautiful day, isn't it? • Can you believe all of this rain we've been having? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It looks like it's going to snow. • It sure would be nice to be in Hawaii right about now. • I hear they're calling for thunderstorms all weekend. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We couldn't ask for a nicer day, could we? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How about this weather? • Did you order this sunshine?
<p>Talking about current events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you catch the news today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you hear about that fire on Fourth St? • What do you think about this transit strike? • I read in the paper today that the Sears Mall is closing. • I heard on the radio today that they are finally going to start building the new bridge. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How about those Reds? Do you think they're going to win tonight?
<p>At the office</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking forward to the weekend? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you worked here long? • I can't believe how busy/quiet we are today, can you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has it been a long week? • You look like you could use a cup of coffee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think of the new computers?
<p>At a social event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So, how do you know Justin? • Have you tried the cabbage rolls that Sandy made? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you enjoying yourself? • It looks like you could use another drink. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretty nice place, huh? • I love your dress. Can I ask where you got it?
<p>Out for a walk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How old's your baby? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's your puppy's name? • The tulips are sure beautiful at this time of year, aren't they. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you like the new park? • Nice day to be outside, isn't it?

Waiting somewhere

- I didn't think it would be so busy today.
- You look like you've got your hands full (with children or goods).
 - The bus must be running late today.
 - It looks like we are going to be here a while, huh?
- I'll have to remember not to come here on Mondays.
 - How long have you been waiting?

Small Talk Practice 1: At a Bus Stop

Read the small talk below and find the **10 mistakes**. Then check your answers.

Woman: We could ask for a better day, could we?

Man: I know. There isn't a cloud in the sky. I love this time of year.

Woman: Me too. The cherry blossoms are beautiful, you think?

Man: They sure are. But I heard he is calling for rain all weekend.

Woman: Really? Oh well. I have to work all weekend anyway. I'm a doctor.

Man: Wow. I'm sure you make good money with that diamond watch you have on.

Woman: Ah, this bus seems to be running late. How long of a wait is it already?

Man: I've been here for at least fifteen minutes now.

Woman: Where are you heading today?

Man: Actually, I'm going to the City Hall to cast my vote for mayor.

Woman: Oh, what a coincidence. So am I! Who are you voting for?

Man: Um, well...I'm still thinking about it.

Woman: Here comes a bus now.

Man: Oh good. Wait, that's not the bus we want. That bus goes downtown.

Woman: Well, it looks like we'll be waiting a little longer. I guess, I'll use this time to catch up on my reading.

Man: I love reading. Right now I'm reading a Stephen King book. Do you like Stephen King?

Woman: Not really.

Man: Oh, here's our bus.

Woman: Oh great. I thought it would never come. Well, have a nice day.

Man: Say, did you catch the news today?

Now check your answers. Did you find all **10 mistakes**?

1.

Woman: We could ask for a better day, could we?

Correction: We couldn't ask for a better day, could we?

2.

Woman: Me too. The cherry blossoms are beautiful, you think?

Correction: Me too. The cherry blossoms are beautiful, aren't they?

3.

Man: They sure are. But I heard he is calling for rain all weekend.

Correction: They sure are. But I heard they are calling for rain all weekend.

4.

Woman: Really? Oh well. I have to work all weekend anyway. I'm a doctor.

Correction: *During small talk with a stranger, it is not common to discuss personal information relating to work.*

5.

Man: Wow. I'm sure you make good money with that diamond watch you have on.

Correction: *It is not acceptable to discuss salaries while making small talk.*

6.

Woman: Ah, this bus seems to be running late. How long of a wait is it already?

Correction: Ah, this bus seems to be running late. How long have you been waiting?

7.

Woman: Where are you heading today?

Correction: *Too personal.*

8.

Woman: Oh, what a coincidence. So am I! Who are you voting for?

Correction: *Politics is not a "safe" subject to discuss.*

9.

Man: I love reading. Right now I'm reading a Stephen King book. Do you like Stephen King?

Correction: *The woman suggested that she wanted to end the conversation. The man did not take the hint.*

10.

Man: Say, did you catch the news today?

Correction: **Thanks. You too. This is not an appropriate time to start a new conversation. The bus's arrival indicates that it is time to stop talking.** **Small Talk Practice 2: At the Office**

Read the small talk below and find the **10 mistakes**. Then check your answers.

Woman: Hi there.

Man: Hi. I haven't seen you around here before. Have you been working long?

Woman: No, I've only been here a few months. I work in the Human Resources Department.

Man: Oh, you must make more money than I do then. I'm in Sales.

Woman: Sales sounds like an interesting job.

Man: It's okay. Hey, you look like you could really have a coffee.

Woman: Yes, it's been a really hectic week.

Man: Tell me about it! At least it's supposing to be a nice weekend.

Woman: Yes, I've listened that they are calling for blue skies.

Man: Say, did you happen to catch the game last night?

Woman: No, I was working late.

Man: It was a great game. We won in overtime.

Woman: Actually, I don't even know who was playing. I don't really follow sports.

Man: The Chiefs! Do you think they're going to make it to the finals this year?

Woman: I'm not sure. Well, I better get back to my desk.

Man: Speaking of desks, what do you think of the new office furniture?

Woman: It's nice, but I would rather get paid for my overtime hours than have new furniture.

Man: Oh. Well, I think I'll be heading home early today. It might be snow.

Woman: I know. I can't believe all of this cold weather. Hopefully Spring will come soon.

Man: I can't wait until Spring.

Woman: Me neither! My divorce will finally come through by then!

Now check your answers. Did you find all **10 mistakes**?

1.

Man: Hi. I haven't seen you around here before. Have you been working long?

Correction: I haven't seen you around here before. Have you worked here long?

2.

Man: Oh, you must make more money than I do then. I'm in Sales.

Correction: Oh, that must be why I haven't seen you around. I'm in Sales.

It is inappropriate to discuss how much people make in an office during small talk.

3.

Man: It's okay. Hey, you look like you could really have a coffee.

Correction: It's okay. Hey, you look like you could really use a coffee.

4.

Man: Tell me about it! At least it's supposing to be a nice weekend.

Correction: Tell me about it! At least it's supposed to be a nice weekend.

5.

Woman: Yes, I've listened that they are calling for blue skies.

Correction: Yes, I've heard that they are calling for blue skies.

6.

Man: The Chiefs! Do you think they're going to make it to the finals this year?

Correction: *The man should not continue with this subject because the woman is obviously not interested in it.*

7.

Man: Speaking of desks, what do you think of the new office furniture?

Correction: *The man did not take the cue that the woman wants to end the conversation.*

8.

Woman: It's nice, but I would rather get paid for my overtime hours than have new furniture.

Correction: *Giving your opinion about a controversial subject is not appropriate when making small talk with someone you don't know or trust.*

9.

Man: Oh. Well, I think I'll be heading home early today. It might be snow.

Correction: Oh. Well, I think I'll be heading home early today. It looks like it might snow.

10.

Man: Me neither! My divorce will finally come through by then!

Correction: *Private information about one's personal life is not acceptable.*

Small Talk Practice 3: At a Party

Read the small talk below and find the **10 mistakes**. Then check your answers.

Woman 1: (Standing in a corner drinking a glass of wine by herself)

Man: Hi there. Why aren't you dancing?

Woman 1: (Smiles. No response.)

Man: Hello. Have you tried Felicia's punch yet?

Woman 2: No, but I was just about to.

Man: Don't. It's terrible.

Woman 2: Oh. Okay.

Man: So, how are you knowing Rick?

Woman 2: Oh, Rick and I go way back. We studied nursing together.

Man: Nursing. Hmm. I heard on the radio today that all of you nurses are on strike. Are they not paying you enough?

Woman 2: Actually it's about working conditions.

Man: I see. So, have you had a chance to take a dip in the pool yet?

Woman 2: No, not yet. How about you?

Man: No, I need to lose some weight before I put on a bathing suit. But you have a great figure.

Woman 2: Uh, thanks. Well, I better go and jingle. There are a few people I haven't said hello to yet.

Man: Wait! Did you hear that the Pope is coming to town?

Woman 2: Ya. I heard that on the news today. I bet it'll be really tough to get to see him.

Man: I know. But I'm not Catholic anyway. Are you?

Woman 2: Yes, I am actually. Well, it looks the sun is finally coming out. I think I'll go take that swim.

Man: You better hurry. I hear they are asking for thunderstorms this afternoon.

Now check your answers. Did you find all **10 mistakes**?

1.

Woman 1: (Smiles. No response.)

Correction: *It is rude not to say anything or answer someone, even if you are shy or don't know the person.*

2.

Man: Don't. It's terrible.

Correction: *Keep negative comments out of your small talk. You don't know if the person you are talking about is a close friend of the person you are talking to.*

3.

Man: So, how are you knowing Rick?

Correction: So, how do you know Rick?

4.

Man: Nursing. Hmm. I heard on the radio today that all of you nurses are on strike. Are they not paying you enough?

Correction: *During small talk it is not appropriate to discuss salaries.*

5.

Man: No, I need to lose some weight before I put on a bathing suit. But you have a great figure.

Correction: *Even though this is a compliment, it may make someone feel uncomfortable. Complimenting clothing is acceptable for small talk, but bodies are not a "safe" topic.*

6.

Woman 2: Uh, thanks. Well, I better go and jingle. There are a few people I haven't said hello to yet.

Correction: Uh, thanks. Well, I better go and mingle. There are a few people I haven't said hello to yet.

7.

Man: Wait! Did you hear that the Pope is coming to town?

Correction: *The man did not take the cue that the woman wants to end the conversation. "Wait" is a very direct word that should never be used in small talk. You could say, "Oh, before you go..." or "I don't want to keep you, but..." if you have something very important to add or ask.*

8.

Man: I know. But I'm not Catholic anyway. Are you?

Correction: *Religion is not a "safe" subject to discuss during small talk.*

9.

Woman 2: Yes, I am actually. Well, it looks the sun is finally coming out. I think I'll go take that swim.

Correction: Yes, I am actually. Well, it looks like the sun is finally coming out. I think I'll go take that swim.

10.

Man: You'd better hurry. I hear they are asking for thunderstorms this afternoon.

Correction: You'd better hurry. I hear they are calling for thunderstorms this afternoon.

Shall versus Will

People may sometimes tell you that there is no difference between **shall** and **will**, or even that today nobody uses **shall** (except in offers such as "Shall I call a taxi?"). This is not really true. The difference between **shall** and **will** is often hidden by the fact that we usually contract them in speaking with 'll. But the difference does exist.

The truth is that there are **two** conjugations for the verb **will**:

1st Conjugation (objective, simple statement of fact)				
	Person	Verb	Example	Contraction
Singular	I	shall	I shall be in London tomorrow.	I'll
	you	will	You will see a large building on the left.	You'll
	he, she, it	will	He will be wearing blue.	He'll
Plural	we	shall	We shall not be there when you arrive.	We shan't
	you	will	You will find his office on the 7th floor.	You'll
	they	will	They will arrive late.	They'll

2nd Conjugation (subjective, strong assertion, promise or command)				
	Person	Verb	Example	Contraction
Singular	I	will	I will do everything possible to help.	I'll
	you	shall	You shall be sorry for this.	You'll
	he, she, it	shall	It shall be done.	It'll
Plural	we	will	We will not interfere.	We won't
	you	shall	You shall do as you're told.	You'll
	they	shall	They shall give one month's notice.	They'll

It is true that this difference is not universally recognized. However, let those who make assertions such as "People in the USA never use 'shall'" peruse a good US English dictionary, or many US legal documents which often contain phrases such as:

-
- **Each party shall** give one month's notice in writing in the event of termination.

Note that exactly the same rule applies in the case of *should* and *would*. It is perfectly normal, and somewhat more elegant, to write, for example:

- **I should** be grateful if **you would** kindly send me your latest catalogue.

Modal Verbs (modal auxiliaries)

Modal auxiliary verbs may sound difficult but in fact they're easy. They are invariable (no conjugation). And the main verb is always the "bare infinitive" (the infinitive without "to").

Can, Could, Be able to | Quiz

Can and *could* are modal auxiliary verbs. *Be able to* is NOT an auxiliary verb (it uses the verb *be* as a main verb). We include *be able to* here for convenience.

Have to, Must, Must not/Mustn't | Quiz

Must is a modal auxiliary verb. *Have to* is NOT an auxiliary verb (it uses the verb *have* as a main verb). We include *have to* here for convenience.

Shall versus Will | Should versus Would

People may sometimes tell you that there is no difference between *shall* and *will*, or even that today nobody uses *shall* (except in offers such as "Shall I call a taxi?"). They say the same thing about *should*, but it's not really true.

Would | Quiz

Would is an auxiliary verb, a modal auxiliary verb. We use *would* mainly to talk about the past, talk about the future in the past and express the conditional mood.

Should | Quiz

Should is an auxiliary verb, a modal auxiliary verb. We use *should* mainly to give advice or make recommendations, talk about obligation or talk about probability and expectation.

English Prepositions

A **preposition** is a word governing, and usually coming in front of, a *noun or pronoun* and expressing a relation to another word or element, as in:

- She left **before** *breakfast*.
- *What* did you come **for**?
(For what did you come?)

List of Prepositions

A Simple Rule for Prepositions

Prepositions of Place

at the bus stop, in the box, on the wall

Prepositions of Time

at Christmas, in May, on Friday

English Preposition Rule

There is one very simple rule about prepositions. And, unlike most rules, this rule has no exceptions.

Rule

A preposition is followed by a "noun". It is never followed by a verb.

By "noun" we include:

- **noun** (dog, money, love)
- **proper noun (name)** (Bangkok, Mary)
- **pronoun** (you, him, us)
- **noun group** (my first job)
- **gerund** (swimming)

A preposition cannot be followed by a verb. If we want to follow a preposition by a verb, we must use the "-ing" form which is really a gerund or verb in noun form.

Prepositions of Place: at, in, on

In general, we use:

- **at** for a POINT
- **in** for an ENCLOSED SPACE
- **on** for a SURFACE

At	in	on
POINT	ENCLOSED SPACE	SURFACE
at the corner	in the garden	on the wall
at the bus stop	in London	on the ceiling
at the door	in France	on the door
at the top of the page	in a box	on the cover
at the end of the road	in my pocket	on the floor
at the entrance	in my wallet	on the carpet
at the crossroads	in a building	on the menu
at the front desk	in a car	on a page

Look at these examples:

- Jane is waiting for you **at** the bus stop.
- The shop is **at** the end of the street.
- My plane stopped **at** Dubai and Hanoi and arrived **in** Bangkok two hours late.
- When will you arrive **at** the office?
- Do you work **in** an office?
- I have a meeting **in** New York.
- Do you live **in** Japan?
- Jupiter is **in** the Solar System.
- The author's name is **on** the cover of the book.
- There are no prices **on** this menu.
- You are standing **on** my foot.
- There was a "no smoking" sign **on** the wall.
- I live **on** the 7th floor **at** 21 Oxford Street **in** London.

Notice the use of the prepositions of place **at**, **in** and **on** in these standard expressions:

At	in	on
at home	in a car	on a bus
at work	in a taxi	on a train
at school	in a helicopter	on a plane
at university	in a boat	on a ship
at college	in a lift (elevator)	on a bicycle, on a motorbike
at the top	in the newspaper	on a horse, on an elephant
at the bottom	in the sky	on the radio, on television
at the side	in a row	on the left, on the right
at reception	in Oxford Street	on the way

Prepositions of Time: at, in, on

We use:

- **at** for a PRECISE TIME
- **in** for MONTHS, YEARS, CENTURIES and LONG PERIODS
- **on** for DAYS and DATES

at	in	on
PRECISE TIME	MONTHS, YEARS, CENTURIES and LONG PERIODS	DAYS and DATES
at 3 o'clock	in May	on Sunday
at 10.30am	in summer	on Tuesdays
at noon	in the summer	on 6 March
at dinnertime	in 1990	on 25 Dec. 2010
at bedtime	in the 1990s	on Christmas Day
at sunrise	in the next century	on Independence Day
at sunset	in the Ice Age	on my birthday
at the moment	in the past/future	on New Year's Eve

Look at these examples:

- I have a meeting **at** 9am.
- The shop closes **at** midnight.
- Jane went home **at** lunchtime.
- In England, it often snows **in** December.
- Do you think we will go to Jupiter **in** the future?
- There should be a lot of progress **in** the next century.
- Do you work **on** Mondays?
- Her birthday is **on** 20 November.
- Where will you be **on** New Year's Day?

Notice the use of the preposition of time **at** in the following standard expressions:

Expression	Example
at night	The stars shine at night .
at the weekend	I don't usually work at the weekend .
at Christmas/Easter	I stay with my family at Christmas .
at the same time	We finished the test at the same time .
at present	He's not home at present . Try later.

Notice the use of the prepositions of time **in** and **on** in these common expressions:

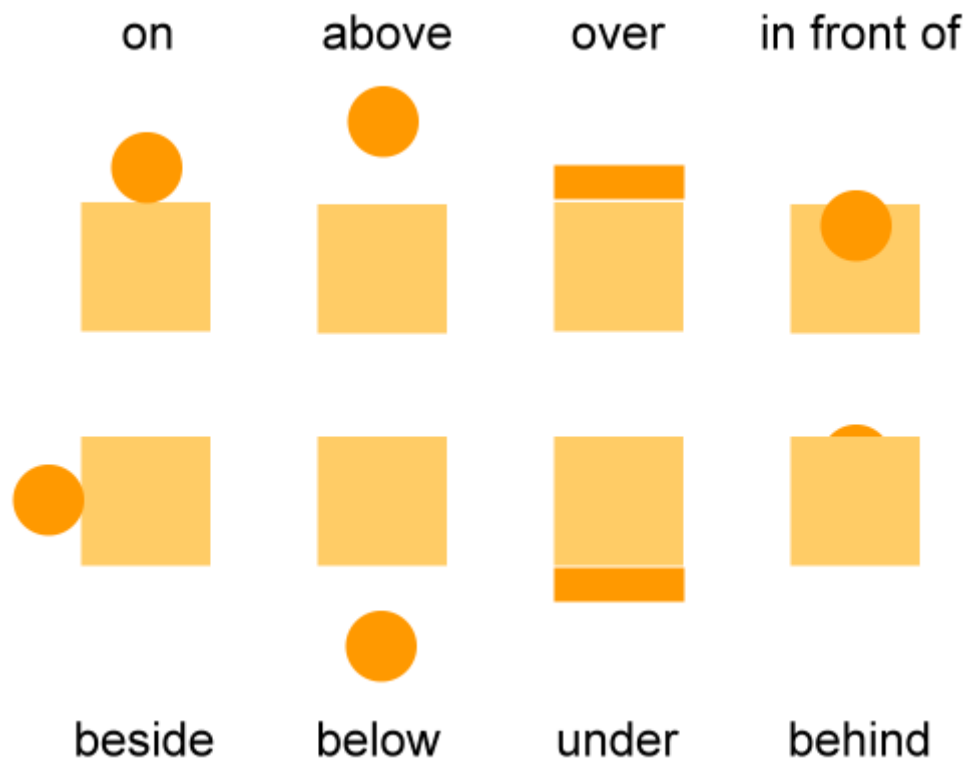
in	on
in the morning	on Tuesday morning
in the mornings	on Saturday mornings
in the afternoon(s)	on Sunday afternoons
in the evening(s)	on Monday evening

When we say **last**, **next**, **every**, **this** we do not also use **at**, **in**, **on**.

- I went to London **last** June. (*not in last* June)
- He's coming back **next** Tuesday. (*not on next* Tuesday)
- I go home **every** Easter. (*not at every* Easter)
- We'll call you **this** evening. (*not in this* evening)

Prepositions of Place

This diagram shows some of the more common prepositions of place and indicates their meaning.



Telling the Time

Asking the time

Here are some phrases you can use when you want to know the time:

- What's the time?
- What time is it?
- Have you got the right time?
- What time do you make it?

Telling the time

To tell someone what the time is, we can say "The time is..." or, more usually, "It's...". Here is a typical dialogue:

Question: What's the time, please?

Answer: It's three o'clock.

The chart below shows you two different ways to tell someone what the time is.

	more formal	less formal
	It's...	It's...
3.00	three o'clock	three
3.02	<i>just gone three o'clock</i>	three oh two
3.03	three <i>minutes</i> past three	three oh three
3.05	five past three	three oh five
3.09	nine <i>minutes</i> past three	three oh nine
3.10	ten past three	three ten
3.15	a quarter past three	three fifteen
3.20	twenty past three	three twenty
3.21	twenty-one <i>minutes</i> past three	three twenty-one
3.25	twenty-five past three	three twenty-five
3.30	half past three	three thirty
3.35	twenty-five to four	three thirty-five
3.40	twenty to four	three forty
3.45	a quarter to four	three forty-five
3.50	ten to four	three fifty
3.55	five to four	three fifty-five
3.57	three <i>minutes</i> to four	three fifty-seven
3.58	<i>nearly four o'clock</i>	three fifty-eight
4.00	four o'clock	

Day and Night

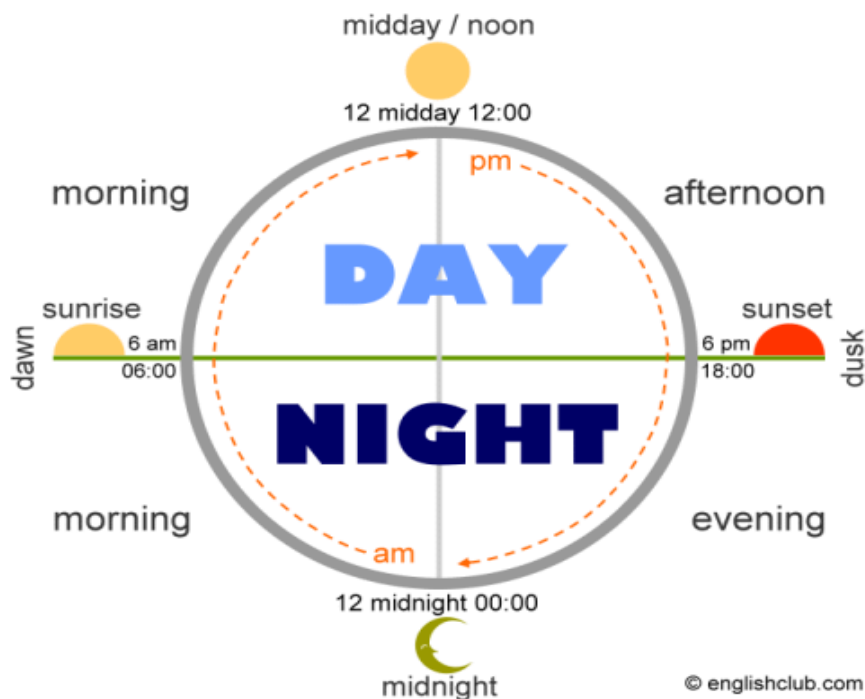
There are 24 hours in a day. The day is divided into "day(time)" and "night(-time)". Daytime is from sunrise (this varies, but we can say approximately 6am) to sunset (we can say approximately 6pm). Night-time is from sunset to sunrise.

Every day starts precisely at midnight. AM (Ante-Meridiem = before noon) starts **just after** midnight.

PM (Post-Meridiem=after noon) starts **just after** midday. This means that 12am and 12pm have no meaning.

This diagram shows the cycle of a 24-hour day and the words we use to describe its parts.

The day starts at midnight (at the bottom of the diagram).



- The word **day** can have two meanings:
1. the 24 hours between one midnight and the next
 2. the time between sunrise and sunset (as distinct from **night**)

Days of the Week

Notice that "weekdays" and "days of the week" are not the same. "Days of the week" are all 7 days from Monday to Sunday. "Weekdays" are only the 5 days from Monday to Friday. The "weekend" is Saturday and Sunday.

	Day	Abbreviation	
weekdays	Monday	Mon.	Mo.
	Tuesday	Tue.	Tu.
	Wednesday	Wed.	We.
	Thursday	Thu.	Th.
	Friday	Fri.	Fr.
weekend	Saturday	Sat.	Sa.
	Sunday	Sun.	Su.

Months of the Year

The list below shows the months of the year used in English-speaking countries and many other parts of the world. The list shows the order of the months, starting from January (month 1).

The abbreviations or short forms shown are the most common, but other abbreviations are possible, for example: Ja./Fe./Ma. or J./F./M.

The days column shows the number of days in the month. All months have 30 or 31 days, except for February which has 28 days (29 in a leap year).

The seasons are approximate and depend on latitude. Some parts of the world have only three seasons. The seasons shown here are for the North Temperate Zone (for example North America). In the southern hemisphere, the seasons are reversed.

Every fourth year, the month of February has 29 days instead of 28. This year is called a "leap year" and the 29th of February is a "leap day". A leap year has 366 days instead of the normal 365.

	Month	Short Form	Days	Season
1	January	Jan.	31	Winter
2	February	Feb.	28/29	
3	March	Mar.	31	Spring
4	April	Apr.	30	
5	May	May	31	
6	June	Jun.	30	Summer

7	July	Jul.	31	
8	August	Aug.	31	
9	September	Sep.	30	Autumn
10	October	Oct.	31	
11	November	Nov.	30	
12	December	Dec.	31	Winter

Writing the Date

There are several different ways to write the date in English. They vary from formal to informal, and there are differences between British and American English. The following table shows some typical formats.

Format	British: Day-Month-Year	American: Month-Day-Year
A	the Fourteenth of March, 1999	March the Fourteenth, 1999
B	14th March 1999	March 14th, 1999
C	14 March 1999	March 14, 1999
D	14/3/1999	3/14/1999
E	14/3/99	3/14/99
F	14/03/99	03/14/99

Note: which format to use is a question of formality, politeness and personal choice. Generally, the longer formats, such as B or C, are more polite (since they show more respect for the reader). Shorter formats, such as D or E, are used in less formal situations, for example a memo, a letter between friends or an impersonal business letter. Format F is rather official and is typically seen on an invoice or an official or technical document. Format A is extremely formal and mainly used on printed items, for example a wedding invitation. The numerical formats may use a full stop (.) or hyphen (-) instead of a slash (/), for example: 14.3.1999 or 03-14-99

Vocabulary

Word <i>Part of speech</i>	Meaning	Example Sentence
absent <i>adj</i>	not present	The vice president is absent due to unforeseen circumstances.
accomplish <i>verb</i>	succeed in doing	We have a lot to accomplish today, so let's begin.

address <i>verb</i>	deal with; speak on	I hope we do not have to address this matter again in the future.
adjourn <i>verb</i>	close a meeting	If there are no further comments, we will adjourn the meeting here.
agenda <i>noun</i>	list of objectives to cover in a meeting	Please forward the agenda to anyone who is speaking at the meeting.
AGM <i>noun(abbr.)</i>	Annual (yearly) General Meeting	We always vote for a new chairperson at the AGM .
allocate <i>verb</i>	assign roles/tasks to certain people	I forgot to allocate someone to bring refreshments.
AOB <i>noun(abbr.)</i>	Any Other Business (unspecified item on agenda)	The last item on the agenda is AOB .
apologies <i>noun</i>	item on agenda announcing people who are absent; apologies for absence	Everyone is present today, so we can skip the apologies .
ballot <i>noun</i>	a type of vote, usually in writing and usually secret	Please fold your ballot in half before you place it in the box.
board of directors <i>noun</i>	group of elected members of an organization/company who meet to make decisions	The board of directors meets once a month to discuss the budget.
boardroom <i>noun</i>	a large meeting room, often has one long table and many chairs	The boardroom is reserved for a managers' meeting, so we'll have to meet in the lounge.
brainstorm <i>verb</i>	thinking to gather ideas	Let's take a few minutes and brainstorm some ways that we can cut costs.
casting vote <i>noun</i>	deciding vote (usually by the chairman) when the votes are otherwise equal	The role of treasurer was decided based on the chairman's casting vote .
chairperson/chair <i>noun</i>	the person who leads or presides at a meeting	As chair , it is my pleasure to introduce to you, Mr. Allan Davis.
clarification/verification <i>noun</i>	explanation/proof that something is true/understood	Before we address this matter, I'll need some clarification as to who was involved.
closing remarks <i>noun</i>	last thoughts spoken in a meeting (i.e. reminders, thank yous)	I just have a few closing remarks and then you will all be free to go.
collaborate <i>verb</i>	work together as a pair/group	The board fell apart because the members had difficulty collaborating .

commence <i>verb</i>	begin	We will commence as soon as the last person signs the attendance sheet.
comment <i>verb or noun</i>	express one's opinions or thoughts	If you have a comment , please raise your hand rather than speak out.
conference <i>noun</i>	formal meeting for discussion, esp. a regular one held by an organization	Before the conference there will be a private meeting for board members only.
conference call <i>noun</i>	telephone meeting between three or more people in different locations	Please make sure I have no interruptions while I'm on the conference call .
confidential <i>adjective</i>	private; not to be shared	Any financial information shared during this meeting should be kept confidential .
consensus <i>noun</i>	general agreement	If we cannot come to a consensus by the end of the meeting we will put it to a vote.
deadline <i>noun</i>	due date for completion	The deadline for buying tickets to the conference is May 25th.
designate <i>verb</i>	assign	If no one volunteers to take the minutes I will be forced to designate someone.
formality <i>noun</i>	a procedure (often unnecessary) that has to be followed due to a rule	Everyone knows who is going to be the next vice president, so this vote is really just a formality .
grievance <i>noun</i>	complaint	The first item on the agenda relates to a grievance reported by the interns.
guest speaker <i>noun</i>	person who joins the group in order to share information or deliver a speech	I am delighted to welcome our guest speaker Holly, who is going to be offering some sales pitch tips.
implement <i>verb</i>	make something happen; follow through	It's not a question of whether or not we're going to use this idea, it's whether or not we know how to implement it.
mandatory <i>adjective</i>	required	It is mandatory that all supervisors attend Friday's meeting.
minutes <i>noun</i>	a written record of everything said at a meeting	Before we begin with today's meeting, let's quickly review the minutes from last month.
motion <i>noun</i>	a suggestion put to a vote	The motion to extend store hours has been passed.

objectives <i>noun</i>	goals to accomplish	I'm pleased that we were able to cover all of the objectives today within the designated time.
opening remarks <i>noun</i>	chairperson or leader's first words at a meeting (i.e. welcome, introductions)	As I mentioned in my opening remarks , we have to clear this room before the end of the hour.
overhead projector <i>noun</i>	machine with a special light that projects a document onto a screen or wall so that all can see	I'm going to put a pie chart on the overhead projector so that everyone can visualize how our profits have declined.
participant <i>noun</i>	person who attends and joins in on an event	Can I have a show of hands of all of those who were participants in last year's conference?
proxy vote <i>noun</i>	a vote cast by one person for or in place of another	There must have been one proxy vote because I count twelve ballots but only eleven attendees.
punctual <i>adjective</i>	on time (not late)	Firstly, I want to thank you all for being punctual despite this early meeting.
recommend <i>verb</i>	suggest	I recommend that you sit closer to the front if you have trouble hearing.
show of hands <i>noun</i>	raised hands to express an opinion in a vote	From the show of hands it appears that everyone is in favour of taking a short break.
strategy <i>noun</i>	plan to make something work	We need to come up with a strategy that will allow us to have meetings less frequently.
unanimous <i>adj</i>	in complete agreement; united in opinion	The vote was unanimous to cut work hours on Fridays.
vote <i>verb or noun</i>	to express (the expression of) an opinion in a group by voice or hand etc	We need to vote for a new vice chairperson now that Jerry is retiring.
wrap up <i>verb</i>	finish	Let's wrap up here so that we can get back to our desks.

Telephone Terms

Here are some of the words and terms that we use to talk **about** telephoning.

answer	to say "hello" into the phone when it rings
---------------	---

answering machine	something that you can record a message on if the person you are calling isn't home
busy signal	a beeping sound that tells the caller that the other person is already on the phone with someone else
call	a telephone conversation; to telephone
caller	the person who telephones
call back/phone back	to call someone who called you first
call display	a screen that shows you who is calling
cellular phone/cell phone	a telephone that you can take with you away from your house; mobile phone
cordless phone	a phone that is not attached to the wall (you can walk short distances with it at home or in the garden)
dial	to press the buttons on the phone
dial tone	the sound the phone makes when you pick it up
directory/phone book	a book that alphabetically lists local phone numbers of people and businesses
hang up	to put the receiver down and end a call
operator	a person who answers telephone-related questions when you dial "0"
pager	a small machine you wear that makes a noise (or vibrates) when someone wants you to call them
phone	a telephone; to telephone
phone booth/pay phone	a place where you can pay to use a telephone in public
pick up	to answer the phone
receiver	the piece on the phone that you speak into and listen from
ring	the sound a phone makes when somebody calls; to make that sound
ringer	the sound-piece that alerts a person that a call is coming through

Telephone Language

Here are some typical phrases that you can use in a telephone conversation.

<p>Answering the phone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello? (informal) • Thank you for calling Boyz Autobody. Jody speaking. How can I help you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctor's office.
<p>Introducing yourself</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hey George. It's Lisa calling. (informal) • Hello, this is Julie Madison calling. • Hi, it's Gerry from the dentist's office here. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is she.* • Speaking.* <p>*The person answering says this if the caller does not recognize their voice.</p>
<p>Asking to speak with someone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Fred in? (informal) • Is Jackson there, please? (informal) • Can I talk to your sister? (informal) • May I speak with Mr. Green, please? • Would the doctor be in/available?
<p>Connecting someone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just a sec. I'll get him. (informal) • Hang on one second. (informal) • Please hold and I'll put you through to his office. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One moment please. • All of our operators are busy at this time. Please hold for the next available person.
<p>Making special requests</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you please repeat that? • Would you mind spelling that for me? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you speak up a little please? • Can you speak a little slower please. My English isn't very strong. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you call me back? I think we have a bad connection. • Can you please hold for a minute? I have another call.
<p>Taking a message for someone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sammy's not in. Who's this? (informal) • I'm sorry, Lisa's not here at the moment. Can I ask who's calling? • I'm afraid he's stepped out. Would you like to leave a message? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He's on lunch right now. Who's calling please? • He's busy right now. Can you call again later?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'll let him know you called. • I'll make sure she gets the message.
Leaving a message with someone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, can you tell him his wife called, please. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, that's okay, I'll call back later. • Yes, it's James from here. When do you expect her back in the office? • Thanks, could you ask him to call Brian when he gets in? • Do you have a pen handy. I don't think he has my number. • Thanks. My number is 222-3456, extension 12.
Confirming information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okay, I've got it all down. • Let me repeat that just to make sure. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you say 555 Charles St.? • You said your name was John, right? • I'll make sure he gets the message.
Listening to an answering machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello. You've reached 222-6789. Please leave a detailed message after the beep. Thank you. • Hi, this is Elizabeth. I'm sorry I'm not available to take your call at this time. Leave me a message and I'll get back to you as soon as I can. • Thank you for calling Dr. Mindin's office. Our hours are 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday. Please call back during these hours, or leave a message after the tone. If this is an emergency please call the hospital at 333-7896.
Leaving a message on an answering machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hey Mikako. It's Yuka. Call me! (informal) • Hello, this is Ricardo calling for Luke. Could you please return my call as soon as possible. My number is 334-5689. Thank you. • Hello Maxwell. This is Marina from the doctor's office calling. I just wanted to let you know that you're due for a check-up this month. Please give us a ring/buzz whenever it's convenient.
Finishing a conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well, I guess I better get going. Talk to you soon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks for calling. Bye for now. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have to let you go now. • I have another call coming through. I better run. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm afraid that's my other line. • I'll talk to you again soon. Bye.

English Parts of Speech

There are thousands of words in any language. But not all words have the same job. For example, some words express "action". Other words express a "thing". Other words "join" one word to another word. These are the "building blocks" of the language. Think of them like the parts of a house. When we want to build a house, we use concrete to make the foundations or base. We use bricks to make the walls. We use window frames to make the windows, and door frames to make the doorways. And we use cement to join them all together. Each part of the house has its own job. And when we want to build a sentence, we use the different types of word. Each type of word has its own job.

We can categorize English words into 8 basic types or classes. These classes are called "parts of speech".

It's quite important to recognize parts of speech. This helps you to analyze sentences and understand them. It also helps you to construct good sentences.

In this lesson, we have an overview of the eight parts of speech, followed by a quiz to check your understanding:

- [Parts of Speech Table](#)
- [Parts of Speech Examples](#)
- [Words with More than One Job](#)
- [Parts of Speech Quiz](#)

Parts of Speech Table

This is a summary of the 8 parts of speech*. You can find more detail if you click on each part of speech.

part of speech	function or "job"	example words	example sentences
Verb	action or state	(to) be, have, do, like, work, sing, can, must	EnglishClub.com is a web site. I like EnglishClub.com.
Noun	thing or person	pen, dog, work, music, town, London, teacher, John	This is my dog . He lives in my house . We live in London .
Adjective	describes a noun	a/an, the, 69, some, good, big, red, well, interesting	My dog is big . I like big dogs.
Adverb	describes a verb, adjective or adverb	quickly, silently, well, badly, very, really	My dog eats quickly . When he is very hungry, he eats really quickly.
Pronoun	replaces a noun	I, you, he, she, some	Tara is Indian. She is beautiful.
Preposition	links a noun to another word	to, at, after, on, but	We went to school on Monday.
Conjunction	joins clauses or sentences or words	and, but, when	I like dogs and I like cats. I like cats and dogs. I like dogs but I don't like cats.
Interjection	short exclamation, sometimes inserted into a sentence	oh!, ouch!, hi!, well	Ouch! That hurts! Hi! How are you? Well , I don't know.

* Some grammar sources categorize English into **9** or **10** parts of speech. At EnglishClub.com, we use the traditional categorization of **8** parts of speech. Examples of other categorizations are:

- Verbs may be treated as two different parts of speech:

- **Lexical Verbs** (*work, like, run*)
- **Auxiliary Verbs** (*be, have, must*)
- **Determiners** may be treated as a separate part of speech, instead of being categorized under Adjectives
- **Parts of Speech Examples**
- Here are some sentences made with different English parts of speech:

verb	noun	verb	noun	verb	verb
Stop!	John	works.	John	is	working.

•

pronoun	verb	noun	noun	verb	adjective	noun
She	loves	animals.	Animals	like	kind	people.

•

noun	verb	noun	adverb	noun	verb	adjective	noun
Tara	speaks	English	well.	Tara	speaks	good	English.

•

pronoun	verb	preposition	adjective	noun	adverb
She	ran	to	the	station	quickly.

•

pron.	verb	adj.	noun	conjunction	pron.	verb	pron.
She	likes	big	snakes	but	I	hate	them.

- Here is a sentence that contains every part of speech:

interjection	pron.	conj.	adj.	noun	verb	prep.	noun	adverb
Well,	she	and	young	John	walk	to	school	slowly.

Words with More than One Job

Many words in English can have more than one job, or be more than one part of speech. For example, "work" can be a verb and a noun; "but" can be a conjunction and a preposition; "well" can be an adjective, an adverb and an interjection. In addition, many nouns can act as adjectives.

To analyze the part of speech, ask yourself: "What **job** is this word doing in this sentence?"

In the table below you can see a few examples. Of course, there are more, even for some of the words in the table. In fact, if you look in a good dictionary you will see that the word **but** has six jobs to do:

- verb, noun, adverb, pronoun, preposition and conjunction!

word	part of speech	example
work	noun	My work is easy.

	verb	I work in London.
but	conjunction	John came but Mary didn't come.
	preposition	Everyone came but Mary.
well	adjective	Are you well ?
	adverb	She speaks well .
	interjection	Well! That's expensive!
afternoon	noun	We ate in the afternoon .
	noun acting as adjective	We had afternoon tea.

Weather

English speakers love to talk about the weather. It is a way of *breaking the ice* (starting a conversation).

People talk about the weather on the phone and in person. Friends and family talk about the weather before they

discuss what's new. Co-workers talk about the weather before starting a hard day of work. Even strangers discuss

the weather. Learn the proper vocabulary and expressions, and you will find it easy to start a conversation anytime and anywhere with anyone you meet!

Common questions and responses about Weather

What's it like out?	It's miserable out.
How's the weather?	It's ten below. (-10 degrees)
Do you have rain?	We haven't had a drop of rain for weeks.
What's the temperature there?	It's 22 degrees Celsius.
It's snowing here, what's it doing there?	It's pouring outside. (<i>raining heavily</i>)
Beautiful day, huh?	We couldn't ask for a better day than this.
What's the weather forecast?	They're calling for blue skies all week.

One common mistake learners make when talking about the weather is mixing up the noun, adjective and verb forms of weather words.

Example 2: *What's it like out?*

It is rain. **Incorrect**
 It is raining. **Correct**
 It is rainy. **Correct**

Example 3: *What's the weather like?*

It is sun. **Incorrect**
 It is sunny. **Correct**
 The sun is shining. **orrect**

Small Talk: Conversation Starters

<p>Talking about the weather</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautiful day, isn't it? • Can you believe all of this rain we've been having? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It looks like it's going to snow. • It sure would be nice to be in Hawaii right about now. • I hear they're calling for thunderstorms all weekend. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We couldn't ask for a nicer day, could we? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How about this weather? • Did you order this sunshine?
<p>Talking about current events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you catch the news today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you hear about that fire on Fourth St? • What do you think about this transit strike? • I read in the paper today that the Sears Mall is closing. • I heard on the radio today that they are finally going to start building the new bridge. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How about those Reds? Do you think they're going to win tonight?
<p>At the office</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking forward to the weekend? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you worked here long? • I can't believe how busy/quiet we are today, can you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has it been a long week? • You look like you could use a cup of coffee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think of the new computers?
<p>At a social event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So, how do you know Justin? • Have you tried the cabbage rolls that Sandy made? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you enjoying yourself? • It looks like you could use another drink. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretty nice place, huh? • I love your dress. Can I ask where you got it?
<p>Out for a walk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How old's your baby? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's your puppy's name? • The tulips are sure beautiful at this time of year, aren't they. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you like the new park? • Nice day to be outside, isn't it?

Waiting somewhere

- I didn't think it would be so busy today.
- You look like you've got your hands full (with children or goods).
 - The bus must be running late today.
 - It looks like we are going to be here a while, huh?
- I'll have to remember not to come here on Mondays.
 - How long have you been waiting?

Small Talk Practice 1: At a Bus Stop

Read the small talk below and find the **10 mistakes**. Then check your answers.

Woman: We could ask for a better day, could we?

Man: I know. There isn't a cloud in the sky. I love this time of year.

Woman: Me too. The cherry blossoms are beautiful, you think?

Man: They sure are. But I heard he is calling for rain all weekend.

Woman: Really? Oh well. I have to work all weekend anyway. I'm a doctor.

Man: Wow. I'm sure you make good money with that diamond watch you have on.

Woman: Ah, this bus seems to be running late. How long of a wait is it already?

Man: I've been here for at least fifteen minutes now.

Woman: Where are you heading today?

Man: Actually, I'm going to the City Hall to cast my vote for mayor.

Woman: Oh, what a coincidence. So am I! Who are you voting for?

Man: Um, well...I'm still thinking about it.

Woman: Here comes a bus now.

Man: Oh good. Wait, that's not the bus we want. That bus goes downtown.

Woman: Well, it looks like we'll be waiting a little longer. I guess, I'll use this time to catch up on my reading.

Man: I love reading. Right now I'm reading a Stephen King book. Do you like Stephen King?

Woman: Not really.

Man: Oh, here's our bus.

Woman: Oh great. I thought it would never come. Well, have a nice day.

Man: Say, did you catch the news today?

Now check your answers. Did you find all **10 mistakes**?

1.

Woman: We could ask for a better day, could we?

Correction: We couldn't ask for a better day, could we?

2.

Woman: Me too. The cherry blossoms are beautiful, you think?

Correction: Me too. The cherry blossoms are beautiful, aren't they?

3.

Man: They sure are. But I heard he is calling for rain all weekend.

Correction: They sure are. But I heard they are calling for rain all weekend.

4.

Woman: Really? Oh well. I have to work all weekend anyway. I'm a doctor.

Correction: *During small talk with a stranger, it is not common to discuss personal information relating to work.*

5.

Man: Wow. I'm sure you make good money with that diamond watch you have on.

Correction: *It is not acceptable to discuss salaries while making small talk.*

6.

Woman: Ah, this bus seems to be running late. How long of a wait is it already?

Correction: Ah, this bus seems to be running late. How long have you been waiting?

7.

Woman: Where are you heading today?

Correction: *Too personal.*

8.

Woman: Oh, what a coincidence. So am I! Who are you voting for?

Correction: *Politics is not a "safe" subject to discuss.*

9.

Man: I love reading. Right now I'm reading a Stephen King book. Do you like Stephen King?

Correction: *The woman suggested that she wanted to end the conversation. The man did not take the hint.*

10.

Man: Say, did you catch the news today?

Correction: **Thanks. You too. This is not an appropriate time to start a new conversation. The bus's arrival indicates that it is time to stop talking.** **Small Talk Practice 2: At the Office**

Read the small talk below and find the **10 mistakes**. Then check your answers.

Woman: Hi there.

Man: Hi. I haven't seen you around here before. Have you been working long?

Woman: No, I've only been here a few months. I work in the Human Resources Department.

Man: Oh, you must make more money than I do then. I'm in Sales.

Woman: Sales sounds like an interesting job.

Man: It's okay. Hey, you look like you could really have a coffee.

Woman: Yes, it's been a really hectic week.

Man: Tell me about it! At least it's supposing to be a nice weekend.

Woman: Yes, I've listened that they are calling for blue skies.

Man: Say, did you happen to catch the game last night?

Woman: No, I was working late.

Man: It was a great game. We won in overtime.

Woman: Actually, I don't even know who was playing. I don't really follow sports.

Man: The Chiefs! Do you think they're going to make it to the finals this year?

Woman: I'm not sure. Well, I better get back to my desk.

Man: Speaking of desks, what do you think of the new office furniture?

Woman: It's nice, but I would rather get paid for my overtime hours than have new furniture.

Man: Oh. Well, I think I'll be heading home early today. It might be snow.

Woman: I know. I can't believe all of this cold weather. Hopefully Spring will come soon.

Man: I can't wait until Spring.

Woman: Me neither! My divorce will finally come through by then!

Now check your answers. Did you find all **10 mistakes**?

1.

Man: Hi. I haven't seen you around here before. Have you been working long?

Correction: I haven't seen you around here before. Have you worked here long?

2.

Man: Oh, you must make more money than I do then. I'm in Sales.

Correction: Oh, that must be why I haven't seen you around. I'm in Sales.

It is inappropriate to discuss how much people make in an office during small talk.

3.

Man: It's okay. Hey, you look like you could really have a coffee.

Correction: It's okay. Hey, you look like you could really use a coffee.

4.

Man: Tell me about it! At least it's supposing to be a nice weekend.

Correction: Tell me about it! At least it's supposed to be a nice weekend.

5.

Woman: Yes, I've listened that they are calling for blue skies.

Correction: Yes, I've heard that they are calling for blue skies.

6.

Man: The Chiefs! Do you think they're going to make it to the finals this year?

Correction: *The man should not continue with this subject because the woman is obviously not interested in it.*

7.

Man: Speaking of desks, what do you think of the new office furniture?

Correction: *The man did not take the cue that the woman wants to end the conversation.*

8.

Woman: It's nice, but I would rather get paid for my overtime hours than have new furniture.

Correction: *Giving your opinion about a controversial subject is not appropriate when making small talk with someone you don't know or trust.*

9.

Man: Oh. Well, I think I'll be heading home early today. It might be snow.

Correction: Oh. Well, I think I'll be heading home early today. It looks like it might snow.

10.

Man: Me neither! My divorce will finally come through by then!

Correction: *Private information about one's personal life is not acceptable.*

Small Talk Practice 3: At a Party

Read the small talk below and find the **10 mistakes**. Then check your answers.

Woman 1: (Standing in a corner drinking a glass of wine by herself)

Man: Hi there. Why aren't you dancing?

Woman 1: (Smiles. No response.)

Man: Hello. Have you tried Felicia's punch yet?

Woman 2: No, but I was just about to.

Man: Don't. It's terrible.

Woman 2: Oh. Okay.

Man: So, how are you knowing Rick?

Woman 2: Oh, Rick and I go way back. We studied nursing together.

Man: Nursing. Hmm. I heard on the radio today that all of you nurses are on strike. Are they not paying you enough?

Woman 2: Actually it's about working conditions.

Man: I see. So, have you had a chance to take a dip in the pool yet?

Woman 2: No, not yet. How about you?

Man: No, I need to lose some weight before I put on a bathing suit. But you have a great figure.

Woman 2: Uh, thanks. Well, I better go and jingle. There are a few people I haven't said hello to yet.

Man: Wait! Did you hear that the Pope is coming to town?

Woman 2: Ya. I heard that on the news today. I bet it'll be really tough to get to see him.

Man: I know. But I'm not Catholic anyway. Are you?

Woman 2: Yes, I am actually. Well, it looks the sun is finally coming out. I think I'll go take that swim.

Man: You better hurry. I hear they are asking for thunderstorms this afternoon.

Now check your answers. Did you find all **10 mistakes**?

1.

Woman 1: (Smiles. No response.)

Correction: *It is rude not to say anything or answer someone, even if you are shy or don't know the person.*

2.

Man: Don't. It's terrible.

Correction: *Keep negative comments out of your small talk. You don't know if the person you are talking about is a close friend of the person you are talking to.*

3.

Man: So, how are you knowing Rick?

Correction: So, how do you know Rick?

4.

Man: Nursing. Hmm. I heard on the radio today that all of you nurses are on strike. Are they not paying you enough?

Correction: *During small talk it is not appropriate to discuss salaries.*

5.

Man: No, I need to lose some weight before I put on a bathing suit. But you have a great figure.

Correction: *Even though this is a compliment, it may make someone feel uncomfortable. Complimenting clothing is acceptable for small talk, but bodies are not a "safe" topic.*

6.

Woman 2: Uh, thanks. Well, I better go and jingle. There are a few people I haven't said hello to yet.

Correction: Uh, thanks. Well, I better go and mingle. There are a few people I haven't said hello to yet.

7.

Man: Wait! Did you hear that the Pope is coming to town?

Correction: *The man did not take the cue that the woman wants to end the conversation. "Wait" is a very direct word that should never be used in small talk. You could say, "Oh, before you go..." or "I don't want to keep you, but..." if you have something very important to add or ask.*

8.

Man: I know. But I'm not Catholic anyway. Are you?

Correction: *Religion is not a "safe" subject to discuss during small talk.*

9.

Woman 2: Yes, I am actually. Well, it looks the sun is finally coming out. I think I'll go take that swim.

Correction: Yes, I am actually. Well, it looks like the sun is finally coming out. I think I'll go take that swim.

10.

Man: You'd better hurry. I hear they are asking for thunderstorms this afternoon.

Correction: You'd better hurry. I hear they are calling for thunderstorms this afternoon.

Shall versus Will

People may sometimes tell you that there is no difference between **shall** and **will**, or even that today nobody uses **shall** (except in offers such as "Shall I call a taxi?"). This is not really true. The difference between **shall** and **will** is often hidden by the fact that we usually contract them in speaking with 'll. But the difference does exist.

The truth is that there are **two** conjugations for the verb **will**:

1st Conjugation (objective, simple statement of fact)				
	Person	Verb	Example	Contraction
Singular	I	shall	I shall be in London tomorrow.	I'll
	you	will	You will see a large building on the left.	You'll
	he, she, it	will	He will be wearing blue.	He'll
Plural	we	shall	We shall not be there when you arrive.	We shan't
	you	will	You will find his office on the 7th floor.	You'll
	they	will	They will arrive late.	They'll

2nd Conjugation (subjective, strong assertion, promise or command)				
	Person	Verb	Example	Contraction
Singular	I	will	I will do everything possible to help.	I'll
	you	shall	You shall be sorry for this.	You'll
	he, she, it	shall	It shall be done.	It'll
Plural	we	will	We will not interfere.	We won't
	you	shall	You shall do as you're told.	You'll
	they	shall	They shall give one month's notice.	They'll

It is true that this difference is not universally recognized. However, let those who make assertions such as "People in the USA never use 'shall'" peruse a good US English dictionary, or many US legal documents which often contain phrases such as:

-
- **Each party shall** give one month's notice in writing in the event of termination.

Note that exactly the same rule applies in the case of *should* and *would*. It is perfectly normal, and somewhat more elegant, to write, for example:

- **I should** be grateful if **you would** kindly send me your latest catalogue.

Modal Verbs (modal auxiliaries)

Modal auxiliary verbs may sound difficult but in fact they're easy. They are invariable (no conjugation). And the main verb is always the "bare infinitive" (the infinitive without "to").

Can, Could, Be able to | Quiz

Can and *could* are modal auxiliary verbs. *Be able to* is NOT an auxiliary verb (it uses the verb *be* as a main verb). We include *be able to* here for convenience.

Have to, Must, Must not/Mustn't | Quiz

Must is a modal auxiliary verb. *Have to* is NOT an auxiliary verb (it uses the verb *have* as a main verb). We include *have to* here for convenience.

Shall versus Will | Should versus Would

People may sometimes tell you that there is no difference between *shall* and *will*, or even that today nobody uses *shall* (except in offers such as "Shall I call a taxi?"). They say the same thing about *should*, but it's not really true.

Would | Quiz

Would is an auxiliary verb, a modal auxiliary verb. We use *would* mainly to talk about the past, talk about the future in the past and express the conditional mood.

Should | Quiz

Should is an auxiliary verb, a modal auxiliary verb. We use *should* mainly to give advice or make recommendations, talk about obligation or talk about probability and expectation.

English Prepositions

A **preposition** is a word governing, and usually coming in front of, a *noun or pronoun* and expressing a relation to another word or element, as in:

- She left **before** *breakfast*.
- *What* did you come **for**?
(For what did you come?)

List of Prepositions

A Simple Rule for Prepositions

Prepositions of Place

at the bus stop, in the box, on the wall

Prepositions of Time

at Christmas, in May, on Friday

English Preposition Rule

There is one very simple rule about prepositions. And, unlike most rules, this rule has no exceptions.

Rule

A preposition is followed by a "noun". It is never followed by a verb.

By "noun" we include:

- **noun** (dog, money, love)
- **proper noun (name)** (Bangkok, Mary)
- **pronoun** (you, him, us)
- **noun group** (my first job)
- **gerund** (swimming)

A preposition cannot be followed by a verb. If we want to follow a preposition by a verb, we must use the "-ing" form which is really a gerund or verb in noun form.

Prepositions of Place: at, in, on

In general, we use:

- **at** for a POINT
- **in** for an ENCLOSED SPACE
- **on** for a SURFACE

At	in	on
POINT	ENCLOSED SPACE	SURFACE
at the corner	in the garden	on the wall
at the bus stop	in London	on the ceiling
at the door	in France	on the door
at the top of the page	in a box	on the cover
at the end of the road	in my pocket	on the floor
at the entrance	in my wallet	on the carpet
at the crossroads	in a building	on the menu
at the front desk	in a car	on a page

Look at these examples:

- Jane is waiting for you **at** the bus stop.
- The shop is **at** the end of the street.
- My plane stopped **at** Dubai and Hanoi and arrived **in** Bangkok two hours late.
- When will you arrive **at** the office?
- Do you work **in** an office?
- I have a meeting **in** New York.
- Do you live **in** Japan?
- Jupiter is **in** the Solar System.
- The author's name is **on** the cover of the book.
- There are no prices **on** this menu.
- You are standing **on** my foot.
- There was a "no smoking" sign **on** the wall.
- I live **on** the 7th floor **at** 21 Oxford Street **in** London.

Notice the use of the prepositions of place **at**, **in** and **on** in these standard expressions:

At	in	on
at home	in a car	on a bus
at work	in a taxi	on a train
at school	in a helicopter	on a plane
at university	in a boat	on a ship
at college	in a lift (elevator)	on a bicycle, on a motorbike
at the top	in the newspaper	on a horse, on an elephant
at the bottom	in the sky	on the radio, on television
at the side	in a row	on the left, on the right
at reception	in Oxford Street	on the way

Prepositions of Time: at, in, on

We use:

- **at** for a PRECISE TIME
- **in** for MONTHS, YEARS, CENTURIES and LONG PERIODS
- **on** for DAYS and DATES

at	in	on
PRECISE TIME	MONTHS, YEARS, CENTURIES and LONG PERIODS	DAYS and DATES
at 3 o'clock	in May	on Sunday
at 10.30am	in summer	on Tuesdays
at noon	in the summer	on 6 March
at dinnertime	in 1990	on 25 Dec. 2010
at bedtime	in the 1990s	on Christmas Day
at sunrise	in the next century	on Independence Day
at sunset	in the Ice Age	on my birthday
at the moment	in the past/future	on New Year's Eve

Look at these examples:

- I have a meeting **at** 9am.
- The shop closes **at** midnight.
- Jane went home **at** lunchtime.
- In England, it often snows **in** December.
- Do you think we will go to Jupiter **in** the future?
- There should be a lot of progress **in** the next century.
- Do you work **on** Mondays?
- Her birthday is **on** 20 November.
- Where will you be **on** New Year's Day?

Notice the use of the preposition of time **at** in the following standard expressions:

Expression	Example
at night	The stars shine at night .
at the weekend	I don't usually work at the weekend .
at Christmas/Easter	I stay with my family at Christmas .
at the same time	We finished the test at the same time .
at present	He's not home at present . Try later.

Notice the use of the prepositions of time **in** and **on** in these common expressions:

in	on
in the morning	on Tuesday morning
in the mornings	on Saturday mornings
in the afternoon(s)	on Sunday afternoons
in the evening(s)	on Monday evening

When we say **last**, **next**, **every**, **this** we do not also use **at**, **in**, **on**.

- I went to London **last** June. (*not in last* June)
- He's coming back **next** Tuesday. (*not on next* Tuesday)
- I go home **every** Easter. (*not at every* Easter)
- We'll call you **this** evening. (*not in this* evening)

Prepositions of Place

This diagram shows some of the more common prepositions of place and indicates their meaning.

