

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT WORK





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# Some topics in this course

In addition to the Contents on the previous page, the list below has some of the topics you will find in this course, with the page numbers:

Expressing opinions: 8, 11-14, 36-37 (and everywhere)

Business discussions: 9-23, 27, 29-31, 33-38, 47-49, 92-93

Writing emails and letters: 26-27, 30-32, 38-39, 42-43, 50-55, 57, 59

Using the phone: 42-43, 56, 90-91, 93-94, 100

Schedules and arrangements: 42-43, 90, 94

UK characteristics and information: 9-10, 16-17, 19-21, 24-25, 35-38, 40, 47, 49, 87-88, 90-92, 95-99

Media: 44-45, 97-99

Home services and utilities: 90

Banks, shopping, and resolving problems: 94

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“ Many students of English have said that to learn effective and usable English is not as demanding as learning some other languages: English grammar and syntax are relatively uncomplicated; and there is a large pool of words to draw on: some may be similar to words in your own language.

To move beyond that level is perhaps where you are now. You know you have reached this stage when the exceptions begin to outnumber the rules; when you wrestle with English idioms “done and dusted” or “not my cup of tea” and when you ‘put up with’ those phrasal verbs that have no obvious equivalent in your language. It is often the short English words that are the least easy: words like ‘get’, how we use ‘be’, and all the different prepositions and adverbs.

English is full of words that share the same meaning – or almost the same meaning. The vocabulary has swollen over the centuries, assimilating hundreds of words from French, Latin, Scandinavian, Dutch and many more from all around the world. This richness of choice means that it’s relatively easy to find a word that will be effective. A greater challenge is to find the right word with the right nuance for what you want to say. Some of this comes down to register, how formal or informal you want to be, as you search for the right language for those business meetings and professional discussions, for social encounters, and for dealing with life’s day-to-day needs.

This course is designed to help you find the right words for the right occasions.

Good luck, and enjoy it ! ”

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# ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT WORK

# Talking about yourself

Discuss this information with your teacher:

Name

Job title

Describe your job

Name of company

Who else is in your family?

Company's business activity

How do you enjoy time off?

Describe your home

What do you feel needs to improve most about your English?

Favourite hobbies or sports

First impressions of the UK

# Language in discussion: a point of view

Put these in order, the most enthusiastic first

I really don't like living in London

I'm not sure about living in London

I really like living in London

I don't mind living in London

I'm not very keen on living in London

I quite like living in London

Exchange opinions with your teacher about where you eat out, cinemas and other places you visit.

Express your like or dislike for:

jazz music  
reality TV shows  
meetings  
Chinese food  
pubs  
opera  
flying

# Language in discussion: a progress update

**Can I have a progress update?**



Meetings in Britain may start with the offer of a cup of tea or coffee, and you may find they end without a detailed plan of what is to happen next or who is going to do what.

The British like to be 'on time' for meetings or other appointments, i.e. to arrive at the agreed time. In the European league of punctuality, the Germans are at the top, the British not far behind.

Go through these expressions with your teacher, and highlight ones that you think will be useful for you.

Can you give me a progress report  
Please give me an update  
Where are we with the ... ?  
What is the situation?  
Are we on track?  
How's it coming on?  
How's it going ?  
How's it shaping up?  
What are our delivery dates?  
Are we within budget?  
Are we on target?  
Are you reaching your targets?

## ROLE PLAY

You are the manager of a restaurant. Your colleague (your teacher) has been working on a project to revise and reprint all the menus. Ask for progress, using some of the phrases in red in the bubbles.

**Where are we with** the monthly report? Is it finished?

Is the factory still closed? **What is the situation?**

Ultimately the success of our business comes down to sales. **Are we reaching our targets?**

Are you building your own house? **How's it coming on?**

Are you learning Spanish? **How's it going?**

# Language in discussion: there is one thing...

**Let me give  
you an update**



Let me give you an update  
Let me put you in the picture  
This is the situation  
This is what we're doing  
Let me bring you up to date with what is happening  
Here is the current situation

**It's going well**

It's going well  
Everything is fine  
No problems to report  
It's coming on well  
We're getting there  
Everything is fine but ...  
There is one thing  
One minor problem  
We need to sort out ...  
There is an issue with ...  
The only thing is ...  
There is a difficulty with the  
We had a slight crisis with the ...  
I'm afraid we have a problem  
To be frank it's a bit of a disaster  
It's gone pearshaped

**I want this  
sorted**

I have something to report  
Something has come up  
There is an issue here  
We have a bit of a problem here  
This needs to be resolved as soon as possible  
I want this sorted now.

## ROLE PLAY

You are the office manager,  
and now have a weekly  
meeting with the other staff.  
Ask how things are going  
and if all is well in the office.

Your teacher is the 'other staff'.  
These are the points raised:

- coffee machine is not working
- no coloured paper for the printer
- noise issue with workers outside
- Jerry Smith is always 'ill' and everyone else has to do his work

British managers are encouraged not to be too bossy and hierarchical in the way they manage a meeting. The principle is to give an opportunity for everyone to give their opinions and seek consensus.

Meetings are regarded as moments to share views, to catch up with how things are going. Clients or bosses do not give orders. They prefer to hear other people's suggestions or recommendations before giving their views on how things are taking shape.

# Language in discussion: a response

## What's your view?

How do you feel about ... ?  
What is your view on ... ?  
What do you think?  
What do you suggest?  
Where do you stand on ... ?  
Any thoughts?  
Would you like to comment?  
I need your input here  
How do you react to that?  
What's your angle on ... ?

## My feeling is ...

My feeling is ...  
In my view/opinion  
My impression is ...  
I get the feeling ...  
I'm inclined to think ...  
As far as I'm concerned ...  
It seems to me that ...  
If you want my advice ...  
I suggest ...

Managing Director: **The issue here is** whether our employees are willing to work shifts. Demand is currently so high that we have many orders to meet. The solution is a 24-hour response service.

HR Manager: Seven days a week?

Managing Director: Exactly. **What's your view on this?**

HR Manager: Well, Jim, **my impression is** this working practice will be unpopular. Many of the employees have children and need to be at home in the evenings.

Managing Director: But we have to do something. Sales were poor last year and now we need to take advantage of the surge in demand. **Let's look at the figures:** last year our turnover was £14 million, the previous year £19 million.

HR Manager: **I take your point.** I appreciate the business needs flexibility. **But we have to be realistic.** It will not be easy to get our employees to work evenings, nights and weekends. **The point is** they have other commitments.

Choose an expression below to replace each expression in bold – and keep the meaning as close as possible:

I get the feeling  
the question is  
where do you stand on this?  
the fact is  
to give you an example  
I understand what you're saying  
we have to face facts

And do the same again with the following:

there are practical issues here  
my hunch is  
yes I take that on board.  
the thing is  
any thoughts?  
let me put you in the picture  
what I want to know is

# Language in discussion: clarification

## I'm in two minds

I'm not convinced  
We have to be realistic  
I'm in two minds  
It's not all black and white  
In an ideal world  
On paper  
In theory / in practice  
On second thoughts  
I'm not at all sure about this  
I don't think we'll get away with this  
I'll need to look into this a bit further  
This needs a second look  
The jury's out on this one  
We must think through the implications  
I need to weigh up all the options

Discuss the expressions with your teacher and highlight ones you think you'll need.



## Let me get this straight

Let me get this straight  
I don't quite follow you  
What's your point?  
What are you getting at?  
Can you run that past me again?

**Publisher:** Yes, I do like this book, I really do, and I'm most grateful to you for sending it to me to look at. I think it has a **lot going for it**. I really do. **No question of that**, let me assure you. **The trouble is**, I don't see this being compatible with our list. As a publishing house we concentrate on magazines now, not books. So I'm not sure we can develop this here at Brownings.

**Author:** Russia is constantly in the news, and surely spying stories are very much back in fashion?

**Publisher:** Hmm, yes, but **the situation has changed** at Brownings since our new MD arrived. **We focus on** fashion these days, yes, but in female clothing, not novels and spy thrillers.

**Colleague:** If I can come in there, Alan, I'd like to put in a word for the old-fashioned novel. I think we need to **revisit this** once the MD is settled in the role. We need to **stand back and look at** the potential of authors like Derek here even if they are not quite meeting our short-term needs.

Choose an expression below to replace each expression in bold – and keep the meaning as close as possible:

we need to look at this again  
take this further  
much to be said for it  
the only thing is  
our core business is in  
I'm quite confident about that  
take a broad overview of  
can I just say  
there is something to be said  
things are different

# Language in discussion: expressing a view

Manager: So how's it shaping up?

Researcher: We're getting there, Peter. The way I see it is this: we do away with traditional chicken products and replace them with this non-feathery specimen we have developed – which is all breast of course.

Manager: I'm not sure I follow you, Arthur. Are you suggesting we create an animal to eat?

Researcher: Animal, vegetable, call it what you like. It will break traditional barriers.

Manager: Oh I don't like this idea at all. Sorry, no. I'm totally against developing a food product in a laboratory.

Researcher: Why? We develop medicines in laboratories to keep us healthy. Why not foods?

Manager: We need to take into account wider ethical questions, not focus purely on company profits.

Choose an expression below to replace each expression in bold – and keep the meaning as close as possible:

concentrate exclusively  
this is what I had in mind  
let me get this straight  
it's going okay  
I don't like the sound of this  
bear in mind  
is your recommendation  
how's it going?

**I'm not sure  
this is quite what we're  
looking for**



Yes, but...  
That is true, but ...  
I'm not so sure  
The only thing about this is ...  
I take your point but ...  
It's not quite what I had in mind  
I see what you're saying, but ...  
To be blunt, it's not such a good idea  
I'm not sure I agree with you  
I beg to differ  
Put yourself in my shoes

Discuss the expressions with your teacher and highlight ones you think you'll need.

**I like the  
sound of this**

I'm in favour of this  
I'm all for this  
I like this idea  
I like the sound of this  
I go along with this suggestion  
Let's go with this  
This sounds just the ticket

# Language in discussion: yes and no

Excellent!

I'm all for it

I entirely agree

Exactly!

Absolutely

Good idea

I like the sound of that

That's fine

You are right

I agree

I go along with that

That's very interesting

That's true

Okay

I'm inclined to agree

Fair enough

You may be right

I understand what you're saying

I see your point

Yes and no

I suppose it is possible

I'm not so sure

Do you think so?

Maybe, maybe not

Yes, but...

It's not quite the thing I had in mind

I'm not sure I go along with that

I don't see it that way

Sorry, I don't agree

I don't go along with that

That's wrong

I'm afraid it's out of the question

I'm totally against that

What are you on about? \*

You must be joking \*

Suppose you heard someone make the statements below. Choose a response from the list on the left.



“People should be allowed to drive cars from the age of 14 onwards ”

“ People who live abroad to pay less tax should have no citizenship rights ”

“ We should take more care of the environment ”

“The Queen ought to be Queen of Europe ”

“ Criminals should be sent to live on Mars ”

“ Only two school subjects should be compulsory – Maths and Music ”

“ Public transport should be owned by the state and run by the state ”

“ Theatres should be subsidised ”

“ Smoking should be made illegal ”

“ Everyone should have at least 10 weeks' holiday a year ”

“ We ought to show more kindness and respect to older people ”



\* only use these with people you know quite well

# Language in discussion: getting personal

**No need to fall out over this**



**I'm not being personal, but**

I think there is an issue here and we need to sort it out  
I'm not being personal, but  
I have an issue with  
Let's get this back on track  
Frankly, there is a problem here  
What on earth is going on?

**I know what you're saying**

I know what you're saying  
I take that on board  
Fair enough  
I'm not saying you don't have a point  
I'll hold my hand up to that

## ROLE PLAY

Identify something you want to criticise about life in the UK (e.g. food, weather, cricket, etc). Make your point in a gentle way.

Your teacher accepts your point of view; and then raises an objection to something else, either in the UK or in your country. Do you agree?

You will see later (in Soft at the Edges) how British people tone down criticisms and complaints.

Someone who says **I'm not being personal** suggests that this is exactly what s/he is going to be, but feels uncomfortable about it.

## ROLE PLAY

You are an employee who has been using the photocopier at work to produce leaflets for your friend's guitar performance.

Your teacher is your boss and raises this with you. You accept the point s/he is making.

# Language in discussion: facts and figures

## Let me get straight to the point

Let me get straight to the point  
The thing is ...  
The point is ...  
The issue is ...  
This is the situation  
The root of the problem is ...  
To put it in a nutshell

### ROLE PLAY

Explain to your teacher (using the phrases opposite in red) that you cannot have a tutorial at 9pm in the office. You have children you have to take to school at this time.

## Let me give you some facts

Let me explain  
To give you an example  
For instance  
More specifically  
Let's look at the figures

Discuss the expressions with your teacher and highlight ones you think you'll need.

### ROLE PLAY

Your teacher is now your boss. S/he has asked you to work from home over the next six months to reduce costs in the office. Explain that this is impossible because you have a young family, your partner is a musician and always playing loud music, and there is very little space in your flat.

Meetings in Britain often start with a general chat about the weather or the football or the traffic queue on the way to work.

If there is a sense of urgency and time is short, these preliminary exchanges will be brought to an end by someone saying, for example, 'Let me get straight to the point'. But generally the British like to start meetings slowly.

## Let me get straight to the point

– we are way over budget, and delivery has already been postponed twice.

A new restaurant will not be successful here. **The thing is** people just don't like having long lunches in the UK.

**To put it in a nutshell**, we have to increase output by 20%, or face closure.

**Let's look at the figures:** we have already overspent this year's budget.



# Language in discussion: roughly speaking

## Roughly speaking...

Roughly speaking ...  
 More or less ...  
 Something along those lines  
 There or thereabouts  
 In broads terms  
 In the region of ...  
 Give or take ...

The figures describe how employees travel to the office each day. Report this data using approximate descriptions.

## MEANS of TRAVEL

51 % by car  
 3% walking  
 11% by bicycle  
 26% on a bus  
 9% by train

The British sometimes avoid detail. Of course they are able to discuss precise figures, costs, times, quantities and so on. But in general, the British are more comfortable talking in vague approximates, at least while the idea is new and under discussion. There's always time to clarify the details later, perhaps to put them in writing in an email.

This sense of approximation permeates British thinking. Ask someone the time and they're more likely to say "just after two" than "1403". But digital clocks may change this...

## ROLE PLAY

You are in a meeting. Your colleague (your teacher) gives the information in the speech bubbles below left. Respond with more precise details as listed below right.

## To be precise ...

What are the precise figures?  
 Give me chapter and verse  
 To be precise  
 To give you the exact figures  
 More specifically  
 For instance  
 Let's look at the figures

## More or less

half the employees have their holidays in the month of August .

## Staff Holidays

June 12%  
 July 22%  
 August 48%  
 September 12%  
 Other 6%

## Roughly speaking,

about a third of the workforce is female.

## Employees - 2008

Male 64 %  
 Female 36 %  
 18-30 age 59%  
 31-60 age 41%

The builders expect to finish the new building by March, **something along those lines.**

## Projected completion dates - 2008

Building ... 8 March  
 Driveway and park area ... 3 April  
 Garden design and tree-planting ... 14 April

# Language in discussion: more practice

## ROLE PLAY

Imagine you are the PR manager of the company you work for now. Explain to a journalist (your teacher) where the company has factories or offices, and (approximately) how many employees there are.



Manager: So where is the business coming from ?

Geoff: Most of our sales are generated from the website. **Roughly speaking** 80% of our business is off the internet. A further 5% is sourced elsewhere but the initial contact came via the website. **For instance**, we sold a shower unit last week from the saleroom, but the customer had found us on the internet. So my feeling is that we should increase our budget for internet advertising.

Manager: Hmm. **You may have a point here**, Geoff. However, I think there is a **case to be made for** increasing spending on the saleroom, especially if sales are so much lower there?

Geoff: In my view you'll be **throwing good money after bad**.

Manager: Denis, what's your view on this?

Denis: I take Geoff's point. The internet is **all the rage** these days. I have to say I'm **in two minds** about this. I'm **inclined to think** that we need to update the saleroom and keep investing in that too, unless we are happy for it to become a simple warehouse while the website is the shop window.

Manager: Okay, I **appreciate your contributions**. Leave it with me and I will come up with a solution.

Choose an expression below to replace each expression in bold – and keep the meaning as close as possible:

I understand what you're saying  
sort it out  
thanks for your input  
I'm not at all sure  
in my view  
approximately  
wasting resources  
my feeling is  
an argument in favour of  
very much in fashion

# Language in discussion: the next steps

HR Manager: To put it in a nutshell, Jeremy, we're going to have to let you go.

Employee: Let me get this straight, Clare ... Are you asking me to leave the company?

HR Manager: No, I'm not personally, this is a decision taken by the board.

Employee: Was it the incident at Thompsons?

HR Manager: Yes, I believe that had a lot to do with it.

Employee: But I genuinely thought the visitor had a gun.

HR Manager: It was a Blackberry.

Employee: This was just a human error.

HR Manager: I take your point, but you didn't have to knock the man unconscious. He was our biggest customer.

Employee: Put yourself in my shoes, Clare. What would you have done? Between you and me, I thought the bloke was a bit of an idiot.

Choose an expression below to replace each expression in bold – and keep the meaning as close as possible:

I understand what you're saying  
run that past me again  
imagine you were me  
off the record  
terminate your contract  
was a significant factor  
to get straight to the point

## Let's see how it goes

How do we take this forward?  
So where do we go from here?  
We need to find a way forward  
The next step is ...  
We need to put together ...  
Can I ask you to ...  
Could you look into this  
Are we all agreed ?  
We'll sort something out  
Let's see how it goes  
Play it by ear  
See how it shapes up  
Good, it's sorted !  
Keep me posted  
I think this has been very worthwhile  
We need to move on

Meetings in the UK are sometimes quite informal. A lot of business is discussed in the corridor, or even with a chat in a car, or over a pint in the pub. The British like to mix business with pleasure.

When meetings come to an end there may seem to be no definite and detailed plan as to what happens next. An exchange of emails may follow before people know what exactly has to be done.

Discuss the expressions with your teacher and highlight ones you think you'll need.

Jane, **the next step** is for you to put together a press release, okay ?  
**Good, it's sorted.**

**Are we all agreed ?** Good. **We need to move on.**

# Language in discussion: the direction ahead

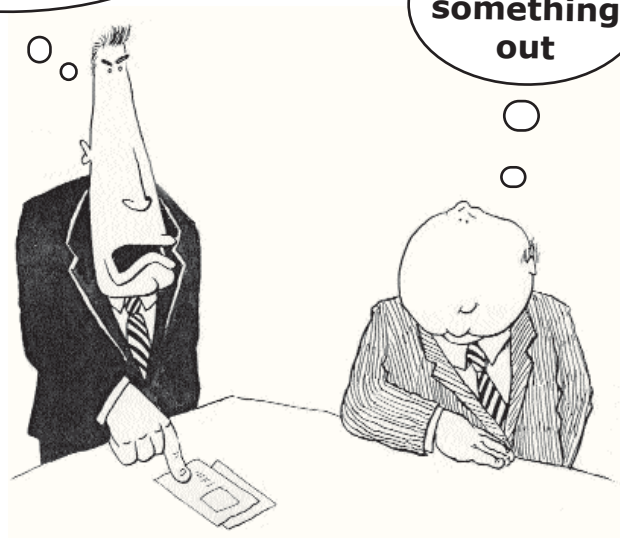
Planning does not come as naturally to Britons as it does to some others. We are perfectly able to express detail if we want to. And indeed in our working lives we have to. There just seems to be a blanket of haziness, a tendency to approximate, which is now part of the language. Perhaps it's because we do not like to think too far ahead, to commit ourselves to something we may not be able to deliver. The French on the other hand are generally much clearer about longer term plans.

A good example of this is when you drive past a roadworks. In the UK, you'll probably see a haphazard collection of vehicles, workmen, piles of gravel, and you probably won't get much of an idea what they are doing. In France, generally the opposite is true. If it's a sliproad being constructed, you'll be able to see that in an instant. That's not to say the UK work is significantly worse, just less clear what's going on. Some call this 'pragmatism'.

Perhaps the reason for the French being better planners is their practice of studying philosophy at school. Perhaps it's because the British live on a foggy island and cannot see too far ahead.

Where French people say they will propose a solution for a problem, we say we'll sort something out. It's almost as if detail is too sharp a concept, another symptom of our softness at the edges.

We need a solution to this problem



Here are some key Anglo-Saxon words and expressions:. Talk these through with your teacher and highlight the ones you may want to use.

how's it shaping up?  
I'll sort (it) out  
we need to work (it) out  
day-to-day  
for the time being  
see how it goes  
let's see what happens  
I'll deal with this  
can you look after this?  
shall I look into this?

French people often use the word **propose** - it is after all a French word. It is an English word too. But guard against overuse. For now, when you want to say **propose**, choose between **offer** and **suggest**. Keep **propose** for that moment when you ask someone to marry you.

What have you noticed about British attitudes to getting things done ?

Some people hold the view that the French make plans, but don't stick to them. Is that fair?

# Language in discussion: meetings in the UK

Do you agree with the comments below ?

Discuss with your teacher your experience of meetings and discussions in the UK.

How different is behaviour in the UK from the business culture in your country ?

## British people will avoid a conflict

This often means an issue is left unresolved – at least in the group meeting. People talk around a problem, identify it maybe, but step back from proposing the solution. British people prefer to go away and think about it, have quiet one-to-one conversations, exchange an email or two, and then plan a solution.

## A meeting is a way of bonding a team

People come together to share views and arrive at a consensus. Discussion is good, argument is not (for it divides the team).

## Managers prefer their authority to be understated

Managers like to have everyone's views 'on board' and for the team 'to go forward together'. Managers are seldom authoritarian or openly hierarchical. They will of course exercise their influence in a quieter, less noticed way. This is a gentler approach than in some cultures, but some might think it a little two-faced.

## Refreshments

People offer tea or coffee or a cold drink as a matter of course before every meeting. If you are supervising a meeting in the UK, don't forget to offer drinks.

## Small talk

Every meeting starts with a friendly exchange of views on the weather or traffic or sports match or some celebrity or other.

## Planning

The British generally do not draw up detailed plans in a meeting. They exchange views and introduce solutions in a deliberately (or culturally natural) vague way. Approximation and vagueness is a part of the idiom: 'see it through', 'sort it out' and 'roughly speaking' are among the typical expressions you will hear in a meeting.

## British people avoid saying 'no'

Expressions like 'yes, but...', 'I'm not entirely sure I go along with that' and 'yes, that's an idea for the future' are all expressions that mean 'no'.

## Punctuality

The British like to be quite punctual, perhaps not as precise as some peoples, but lateness should be avoided.

## The British say 'sorry' a lot

The British say 'sorry' a lot. Not just when they are sorry, but also to catch people's attention, to start a complaint or if they disagree with you.

# Language in discussion: more practice

Think of another way of saying the word or expression in bold (you can change other words too – but keep the meaning as close as possible):

How do you **feel** about working on Saturdays?  
Any thoughts on this?

As far as I'm concerned it's fine. But I get the **feeling** that some of the workers may not like it. We need to **think through** the implications.

My **impression** is that some of the employees like watching football on Saturdays. A lot of these games have been moved to Sunday.

That is true, but they also like shopping and other activities with their families.



**Roughly speaking**, how many employees will work on Saturdays ?

About half, **there or thereabouts**.

Doesn't **sound too bad**.

To be **blunt**, they will want extra pay to work at weekends.

Precisely how much extra ?

Double time, at least – and finish by midday

Let me get this **straight**: they want to work half the hours and be paid double the salary?

# Language in discussion: more practice

And again think of another way of saying the word or expression in bold (you can change other words too – but keep the meaning as close as possible):

So, what do **you think of** this idea for all staff to wear tee-shirts and shorts?

The idea looks good **on paper** but I'm not at all sure about it. We have to be **realistic** – it's very cold in winter.

Sure, in an **ideal** world our summerwear shop would be in the south of France. Wigan can be a bit cold in winter. I'll **look into** this a bit further. How about tropical heating on the shop floor ?



I like the **sound of that !**

On second thoughts, maybe that will be too warm for the customers ?

I see what you're saying

# Language in discussion

## From “England Your England” by George Orwell

When you come back to England from any foreign country, you have immediately the sensation of breathing a different air. Even in the first few minutes dozens of small things conspire to give you this feeling. The beer is bitterer, the coins are heavier, the grass is greener, the advertisements are more blatant. The crowds in the big towns, with their mild knobby faces, their bad teeth and gentle manners, are different from a European crowd. Then the vastness of England swallows you up, and you lose for a while your feeling that the whole nation has a single identifiable character. Are there really such things as nations? Are we not 46 million individuals, all different?

But talk to foreigners, read foreign books or newspapers, and you are brought back to the same thought. Yes, there is something distinctive and recognizable in English civilization. It is a culture as individual as that of Spain. It is somehow bound up with solid breakfasts and gloomy Sundays, smoky towns and winding roads, green fields and red pillar-boxes. It had a flavour of its own. Moreover it is continuous, it stretches into the future and the past, there is something in it that persists, as in a living creature. What can the England of 1940 have in common with the England of 1840? But then, what have you in common with the child of five whose photograph your mother keeps on the mantelpiece? Nothing, except that you happen to be the same person.

And above all, it is your civilization, it is you. However much you hate it or laugh at it, you will never be happy away from it for any length of time. The suet puddings and the red pillar-boxes have entered into your soul. Good or evil it is yours, you belong to it, and this side of the grave you will never get away from the grades it has given you.

National characteristics are not easy to pin down, and when pinned down they often turn out to be trivialities or seem to have no connexion with one another. Spaniards are cruel to animals, Italians can do nothing without making a deafening noise, the Chinese are addicted to gambling. Obviously such things don't matter to themselves. Nevertheless, nothing is causeless, and even the fact that Englishmen have bad teeth can tell one something about the realities of English life.

Here are a couple of generalizations about England that would be accepted by almost all observers. One is that the English are not gifted artistically. They are not as musical as the Germans or Italians, painting and sculpture have never flourished in England as they have in France. Another is that, as

# Language in discussion

Europeans go, the English are not intellectual. They have a horror of abstract thought, they feel no need for any philosophy or systematic 'world view'. Nor is this because they are 'practical', as they are so fond of claiming for themselves. One has only to look at their methods of town-planning and water-supply, their obstinate clinging to everything that is out of date and a nuisance, a spelling system that defies analysis and a system of weights and measures that is intelligible only to the compilers of arithmetic books, to see how little they care about the mere efficiency. But they have a certain power of acting without taking thought. Their world-famed hypocrisy - their double-faced attitude towards the empire, for instance - is bound up with this.

But here it is worth noticing a minor English trait which is extremely well marked though not often commented on, and that is a love of flowers. This is one of the first things that one notices when one reaches England from abroad, especially if one is coming from southern Europe. Does it not contradict the English indifference to the arts? Not really, because it is found in people who have no aesthetic feelings whatever. What it does link up with, however, is another characteristic which is so much a part of us that we barely notice it, and that is the addictions to hobbies and spare-time occupations, the privateness of English life.

We are a nation of flower-lovers, but also a nation of stamp-collectors, pigeon-fanciers, amateur carpenters, coupon-snippers, darts-players, crossword-puzzle fans. All the culture that is most truly native centres around things which even when they are communal are not official - the pub, the football match, the back garden, the fireside and the 'nice cup of tea'. The liberty of the individual is still believed in, almost as in the nineteenth century. But this has nothing to do with the economic liberty, the right to exploit others for profit. It is the liberty to have a home of your own, to do what you like in your spare time, to choose your own amusements instead of having them chosen for you from above. The most hateful of all names in an English ear is Nosey Parker. It is obvious of course, that even this purely private liberty is a lost cause. Like all other modern peoples, the English are in the process of being numbered, labelled, conscripted, 'co-ordinated'. But the pull of their impulses is in the other direction, and the kind of regimentation that can be imposed on them will be modified in consequence.

Do you share the author's views about people in Britain? Discuss with your teacher characteristics that you have noticed about people and life in the UK.

How would you describe the people of your country?

George Orwell wrote *England Your England* more than 60 years ago. How does it show?

# Formal and colloquial language

The English you learned at school or on a training course is generally correct formal English. When you arrive in the UK you'll hear more colloquial language, where words are run together or simply left out (**Good morning!** and **Morning!**, **I have** and **I've**, etc), and you'll come across other expressions that don't appear in textbooks.

Knowledge of formal English may also be helped by your own language background. The majority of words used in technical and professional contexts were created from Latin, itself the parent language of French, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese. If you speak one of these languages you may find **defective**, **accumulate** and **inundation**, for example, more recognisable than **faulty**, **gather** and **flood**. The reverse is true of people living in the UK, who are more comfortable with older native English words, shorter words and idiomatic phrasal expressions.

Thus you will probably find it easier to understand a professional report than a conversation in the pub. And the challenge for you is to learn this colloquial language for it brings you closer to the heart of English (the older native words) and helps you communicate in day-to-day situations with those around you.

It is not our intention to demonstrate the identity of the person culpable for this error.

We're not here to point the finger.

We regret to inform you that the product is not functioning. Please advise what warranty or compensation rights we have.

It's not working. Do we get our money back?

Imagine you are Brian Corbould. Assuming you know Ken Smith quite well, rewrite the letter as an informal email.

English Teas Ltd

The Business Park  
Ashton  
Dipshire  
D14 6JY

24th November 2008

Mr Ken Smith  
14 Tarbuck Close  
Fatstock FT45 3HJ

Dear Mr Smith

On behalf of the management and staff at English Teas, I invite you to attend our Christmas banquet to be held at the King's Hotel, Ashton, on Saturday, 14th December. Guests are invited to arrive for aperitifs for 7.30pm and dinner will be served at 8.30pm. Dress: casual.

There will be dancing until 1pm. Should you wish to stay at the hotel that night please let me know as this can be arranged. Moreover if you have a partner whom you wish to bring with you please advise. We shall be delighted to receive her too.

We very much hope you will be able to attend.

Yours sincerely

Brian Corbould  
HR Manager

# Formal and colloquial language

Match the formal expressions with their colloquial equivalents

We must try to remain optimistic

Sorry, I can't make it on Tuesday. Is Wednesday any good?

That is the ideal solution

Do a good job

I am grateful for your contribution

Get (make) the most out of

Perform a task successfully

Thanks for your input

That'll be just the ticket

Optimize

Unfortunately I'm not available on Tuesday. Is Wednesday possible?

Let's look on the bright side

Now you are Ken Smith.  
Rewrite this letter (a reply to the letter on the previous page) in a more familiar and informal style - as an email.

14 Tarbuck Close  
Fatstock FT45 3HJ

28th November 2008

Mr Brian Corbould  
HR Manager  
English Teas Ltd  
The Business Park  
Ashton  
Dipshire D14 6JY

Dear Mr Corbould

I am most grateful for your kind invitation to the English Teas Christmas banquet on December 14th, and have much pleasure in accepting.

Thank you too for extending the invitation to my wife Teresa who will also be very happy to attend, and we accept your offer of a room at the hotel for the night of the banquet.

We much look forward to seeing you and all our colleagues at English Teas at that occasion.

Yours sincerely

Ken Smith

# Formal and colloquial language

Identify the speakers below:

- a policeman
- an academic
- a political activist
- a business consultant

“Irrefutable evidence of post-imperial trauma is sufficient justification to validate sub-Marxist antagonism towards populist Western governments.”

“I apprehended the gentleman in the act of negotiating an exit from the window of the electrical retail premises. I accosted him and enquired as to the nature of his business in the vicinity. He responded in an amicable manner that he was collecting some property on behalf of an acquaintance who was an employee. I then requested that I might inspect the items in his carrier-bag, which he declined. I concluded it appropriate to detain him for further questioning, and proceeded to a formal arrest.”

“Teams who collectively facilitate collaborative ventures in their applications demonstrate a priority business-case justification for increased budgetary income streams.”

“I anticipate that the annual results will again expose these unerring deficiencies and that the academic excellence of this college will remain subject to ridicule. This is deplorable. The problem if not attended to will unquestionably deteriorate.”

What do the underlined words mean? Think of others to replace them.

## OPINION

“ In the UK some people use the more learned ex-Latin words to give themselves airs (i.e. appear more important). It may just be the result of shyness or a lack of confidence: a relative of mine who was kind enough to babysit would answer the phone with "The Thompson domicile ...". Some prefer 'residence' in the same context, which is hardly an improvement. Is there anything wrong with 'household'? But this sort of affectation is harmless enough and only makes us smile. More devious is the person who uses formal words to hide or soften the meaning: someone who admits he is 'culpable' (i.e. at fault) is usually trying to disguise it. And does someone who 'concur' support your view as much as someone who 'agrees'?

Scientific and technical language is full of words created from Latin (and Greek) sources. In most cases there was a need for a new term and so one was coined. The downside of this is that experts can 'blind us with science' by using terms that few understand outside the particular area of expertise. The worst offenders are political or academic writers. One lecturer started his talk recently with "Contemporary linguistics validates the hypothesis...." . I was asleep before he finished the first sentence. There is an old rule in the use of English: never use a long word if a short one will do just as well. Some people who are unused to writing become verbose as soon as they put pen to paper: "I relinquish to fatigue your intelligence" wrote one poor soul at the end of a letter to someone he hoped to impress. Latin words continue to be used and abused to shape the lifeless language of conformism, ranging from sinister press releases of terrorist groups "We have no expectation of a conciliatory statement" to the dull orthodoxy of the professionally correct, who, in their anxiety to conceal the near-nothingness of what they do, busily implement their procedures and facilitate collaborative projects. ”

# Formal and colloquial language

The words on the left are older native English words, and on the right later imports from French or Latin. Match the pairs which mean (almost) the same:

amount	amicable
body	ascend
break	avaricious
childish	conceal
climb	convene
earth	corporation
freedom	demonstrate
friendly	fracture
greedy	inquire
hide	juvenile
home	labour
meet	liberty
neighbourhood	puerile
seek	quantity
send	residence
show	terrain
work	transmit
young	vicinity

Discuss with your teacher their meaning and how they are used.

Match the formal expressions with their colloquial equivalents

Sorry	It's good to have a chat
This is an outstanding piece of work	The presentation went down well
He's failing to deliver	Completely plastered
We much appreciate your hospitality	Thanks so much - we had a really good time
Incapacitated by alcohol	He's not up to the job
A chaotic situation	You've done a really good job
I will contact you	Sorry ?
I welcome this opportunity for a discussion	A right mess
I do apologise	I'll be in touch
I failed to hear what you said	
The presentation was well received	

# Formal and colloquial language

Match the formal expressions with their colloquial equivalents

I must have a word with you

I'm in two minds

I made the wrong inferences from what you were saying

I understand what you are saying

This is my bottom line

I did not hear what you just said

This is confidential to the two of us

We need to have a discussion

I got the wrong end of the stick

I cannot make any further concessions

No one is having you on

No one is fooling you

I get the picture

I am undecided

Sorry I didn't quite catch that

Between you and me

## Engineering Union

Dear Mr Jones,

I consider that there are operational benefits from improved collaborative activities between the employees.

Yours sincerely

It will be better if all the staff work together more closely

Find a less formal way of expressing the letter and statement below.

*The Firs  
Taddenham Close  
Nether Blosset  
Worcestershire*

4th January 2006

Dear Janet

With the greatest pleasure we received your invitation to drinks on Sunday 3rd November. David and I will be delighted to attend.

We look forward in eager anticipation

Yours sincerely

Sue King

?

*It is with considerable regret that I failed to secure the locks of premises. Unfortunately I had no key upon my person and this resulted in the doors being left unsecured against intruders. I accept that I am culpable and offer my apologies to all employees.*

*Ian Jones, MD*

?

# Formal and colloquial language

## ROLE PLAY

Your company, Thompsons, hopes to create a partnership with another company called Browns. How do you say more formally (e.g. to the media) what you say to a friend in the bubble on the right?

If we can do a good deal with this company, we're in business.

I can't make the meeting on 15th April, I'm tied up all day. Can we sort it for the following week? You're an angel.



## ROLE PLAY

You are the secretary. Your boss, Ian Jones, has left a message on your phone (left). Write an email to all the colleagues due to be at the meeting to ask for their available times.

Match the formal expressions with their colloquial equivalents

The penny's dropped!

What are you getting at?

She was hard to follow

I did not understand her presentation

Between us we failed to communicate!

I'll go along with that

Ah! I understand it now!

Do you understand me?

What was he on about?

I infer from what you write/are saying

Let me make it very clear for you

I'll spell it out for you

What is the point you are trying to make?

I am in agreement with that

We got our wires crossed

I did not understand what he was saying

Reading between the lines ...

Do you get my drift?

# Formal and colloquial language

With your teacher, think up examples for these words:

punctual

exhibit

donate

postpone

terminate

spontaneous

resolve

very suitable

supervise

to agree with

to discuss

on time

show

give

put off

end

off the cuff

sort it out

just the ticket

keep an eye on

to go along with

to have a chat

(or to have a word with)

To: Terry Collins  
From: Peter Williams

Date: 16 Jan 06  
Time: 0945

Hi Terry

Got your email late last night. Can do Monday - let's meet at midday at the office.

I'll sort the presentation stuff with Gary Marshall and he will give you a demo next week before the Paris exhibition. Any idea how many clients are likely to turn up there?

Talk soon  
Pete

Rewrite these emails as letters in a slightly more formal style.

To: Claire Brown  
From: Joanna Walker

Date: 27 May 06  
Time: 0615

Dear Claire

That was a lovely supper last night ! Absolutely delicious ! And great to meet Simon.

Jim says hi and thanks too.

Love

Joanna & Jim  
xxx

# Formal and colloquial language

Pair a speech bubble with a word on the left that closest matches the meaning:

intend	Look, <b>have a word with</b> the manager and see what he says.	Someone needs to <b>sort this out</b> very soon!
supervise		
discuss	Please <b>keep an eye on</b> the children this afternoon.	Let's not let this little disagreement <b>get in the way of</b> what we're trying to do here.
resolve		
impede	The trouble is, she's always <b>getting the wrong end of the stick</b> .	What do you <b>have in mind</b> ?
misunderstand		

expensive	The car doesn't work very well. It's very old and <b>on its last legs</b> .	He hasn't been Sales Manager here long and frankly I'm not sure he's <b>up to it</b> .
capable		
very suitable	No, really, a tent is <b>just the job!</b>	I don't have full details but I can give you some figures <b>off the top of my head</b> .
approximate		
almost collapsed	The new car must have <b>cost a bob or two</b> .	Is she interested in the new position? Do you think she's <b>up for it</b> ?
motivated		

deteriorate	It's time for someone <b>to stand up and be counted</b> .	His jokes just <b>wind me up</b> .
contemplate		
irritate	I'm beginning to <b>get the hang of</b> how this works!	I can <b>lend a hand</b> with practical things, but I'm not much good at computers.
assist		
take responsibility	Once she started working at Bluebells their relationship started to <b>go downhill</b> .	You need to <b>sleep on</b> this. Don't make a hasty decision.
understand		

over the hill	You mustn't drive. <b>You've had too much to drink</b>	She was <b>so happy!</b>
over the moon		
over the top	He's probably a little <b>too old</b> to run the marathon.	I thought his behaviour at the party was <b>too wild</b> .
over the limit		

# Formal and colloquial language

Pair the sentence on the left with the more colloquial expression on the right.

Can I be of assistance? I'm sorry to say

He failed to comprehend the issue Can I lend a hand?

I am in favour of this I can't wait to catch up

I am very grateful I just can't get a handle on it

I completely and unreservedly apologise I'm all for it

I look forward to seeing you again soon I'm really sorry

I regret to inform you it fits the bill

I'm going to have to ask you to leave Thanks very much

It meets our requirements They're not singing off the same hymn sheet

It was a very enjoyable experience This should be just the job

They have insufficient synergy We had a really good time

This project is proving extremely difficult We need to make the most of what we have

This should be highly suitable We need to sit down and sort this out

We need a meeting to resolve these issues You'll have to think on your feet

We need to optimize our existing resources He got the wrong end of the stick

You will need to improvise On your bike

# The UK: soft at the edges?

Many expatriates working in the UK comment that British people avoid direct statements that may appear sudden or harsh: we generally only say 'no' either to children, or when we want to agree with someone (e.g. "Not very warm today." – "No, you're right.")

Not everyone fits this stereotype, of course. Take certain British football fans for instance. But even these people in the privacy of their own home or workplace will be saying 'sorry' when they don't mean it or will ask you how you are while thinking about something else.

## "Sorry"

The British say **yes but** for no. We disagree **with respect**. When we terminate someone's contract, we say 'I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to let you go' as if the employee was a bird in a cage. And we say sorry a lot.

Sorry means 'excuse me', sorry means 'hey', sorry is even something an aggressive person might say before he starts a fight. We even say sorry if someone else accidentally pushes against us and we are innocently standing still.

Sorry is still at face value an apology, and the British are instinctively good at apologising. Whether they mean it or not is another matter.

People say **sorry** ...

- if you accidentally touch someone or they touch you
- to get someone to repeat something
- to catch people's attention
- to say no
- to start a complaint
- to start an argument

and also... to apologise !

I'm sorry  
but ...



## ROLE PLAY

Use 'sorry' at least once in each role-play:

- 1) Your tutor has parked in your space.
- 2) S/he is smoking in a non-smoking area.
- 3) You are rejecting your tutor's application to the role of senior manager in your company.
- 4) You need to ring off as you have a meeting. Arrange to call back.
- 5) You did not hear what your teacher said.

Put these instructions in more polite language:

- 1) Leave now!
- 2) Don't put hot plates on the table.
- 3) Stop talking so loudly!
- 4) Get me some milk.
- 5) Don't smoke in here.
- 6) Turn off the music.

# Soft at the edges: disagreement

**Yes,  
but ...**

British people do say what they think, even if they disagree with you. But there is a tendency to soften the negativity, to avoid being confrontational. Here are some of the ways people say no or disagree in the UK:

“Yes but ...”

“I’m not sure about that”

“I’m not sure I agree with you”

“I’m not sure I go along with that”

“It’s not quite what I had in mind”

“I don’t see it that way”.

With your teacher, think of some more ‘soft’ negative expressions

Respond to the following statements in a ‘soft’ way:

1) “The working day should be extended to 14 hours.”

2) “I suggest we all go rock-climbing.”

3) “If people are caught smoking in public places they should be flogged.”

4) “The best way to improve global communication is to ban all languages except English.”

It's no good waiting for a bus.

**No, I agree.**

I think it's better to walk.

**Yes, but** it will take an hour to get there. Why don't we take a taxi?

## Criticising and being negative

**To be blunt,** I think that's wrong

**To be frank,** I think he's **not very** suitable

**I have to say** I think it's a **bit** risky

**With respect** You **slightly** miss the point

**Let me be straight with you:** we need a new manager

If we want to be more direct in a negative or critical way, we give notice of it: “Let me be straight with you” prepares the way for direct talking. “To be blunt” introduces a negative or controversial remark. “With respect” warns someone that you mean the opposite.

Criticisms are softened with words like

“a bit...”,

“slightly...”,

“not very...”.

We say ‘a bit overcooked’ when we mean ‘cooked too much’.

### ROLE PLAY

Imagine that you are looking around your tutor’s flat with a view to renting it. Using the ‘softening’ phrases, explain that it is

- 1) Too small
- 2) Too far from the centre of the town
- 3) Too expensive
- 4) Very cold
- 5) Next-door to noisy neighbours

# Soft at the edges: understatement

Expressions like “a bit...”, “slightly...”, “not very...” that tone down criticism are symptomatic of British understatement. It is not only negative things we tend to soften, but positive statements too. Sometimes people express their enthusiasm in a way that seems they are not enthusiastic at all:

How's the new job?

- “Not too bad”
- “Could be worse”
- “Mustn't grumble”
- ”I can't complain”

} all mean much the same, i.e. quite good or better than satisfactory

How's the holiday?



Maybe it's because British people do not like to expose their feelings. Not everyone shares this 'reserve' though, but most do have a way of toning down their expression. We 'soften' or qualify descriptions (a bit expensive, slightly overcooked) - and not always negative ones or criticisms.

With your teacher, use 'a bit', 'fairly', etc, to describe your ...

- |                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| ... boss       | <b>a bit ...</b>     |
| ... teacher    | <b>fairly ...</b>    |
| ... partner    | <b>extremely ...</b> |
| ... house      | <b>a little ...</b>  |
| ... job        | <b>very ...</b>      |
| ... office     | <b>quite ...</b>     |
| ... UK food    | <b>pretty ...</b>    |
| ... UK weather | <b>slightly ...</b>  |
| ... UK clothes | <b>not very ...</b>  |
|                | <b>rather ...</b>    |
|                | <b>a touch ...</b>   |
|                | <b>really ...</b>    |

These adjectives may help.  
Add more of your own.

attractive	difficult	kind
big	dodgy	laid back
boring	dull	likeable
bossy	easygoing	nice
bright	efficient	punctual
busy	elegant	pushy
calm	exciting	quiet
caring	expensive	shy
charming	fashionable	small
cold	generous	stressful
complicated	helpful	tasty
confident	impatient	thoughtful
cosy	imposing	time-consuming
dangerous	impressive	understanding
delicious	inspiring	unreliable
demanding	irritating	wet

# Soft at the edges: criticising and complaining

MEMO TO TRAINING DEPT :-

Stefan Bergsen is our new Group IT Manager based at the London office.

One of his tasks is to communicate to colleagues around the UK by email. Already some feedback from the other offices suggests his style may be too abrasive. One or two of his colleagues feel a little put out by the directness of his approach. I attach an example, and ask you to help him adapt.

Thank you for looking into this.

Jerry Spruce  
HR Director

To: IT Managers  
From: Stefan Bergsen  
Date: 14 June 2004

It is forbidden for non-IT staff to install the new software.

Strict compliance is necessary in all UK offices.

Stefan Bergsen

Why do Stefan Bergsen's colleagues in the UK 'feel put out' by his email?  
Rewrite his email in a style more acceptable to them.

All British people are capable of complaining. Within the family or to close friends, they call it 'grumbling' or 'whingeing'. But complaints to other people are generally filtered through the 'soft edge', with statements like *I'm sorry but ...*

Complaints in public cause widespread embarrassment. Thus the British avoid it if they can. Most Britons don't like to complain in case they are perceived to be 'making a fuss'.

Complaining in public is regarded as 'making a scene'. Most children feel awkward if their parents complain to someone in front of them. Compare this with the Italians, where 'making a scene' is entirely natural.

Sometimes when the British do complain they are not very good at it. Or at least, they let things appear worse than they are: the consequence of suppressed feelings rising suddenly to the surface.

I like it,  
but ...



Write a memo to your colleagues with the instruction not to park their cars in the spaces reserved for the senior directors.

You are an HR officer: write an email to employees in Design & Development asking them not to wear jeans in the office.

## ROLE PLAY

You are on a train and are just returning to your seat from the buffet. Someone (your teacher) is sitting in your place.

# Soft at the edges: writing emails

Jean writes English well. However, the style of her emails is not much liked by her colleagues. The problem is her tone. She's not a rude person when you meet her, but her emails have caused offence more than once.

Rewrite these six emails in a softer manner and more acceptable tone.

1.

**To:** dave.jones@smith.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Meeting

Dear Dave

I do not want to meet you on Tuesday as we had arranged. I am required elsewhere. We have to arrange another meeting at mutual convenience.

Regards  
Jean

2.

**To:** clare.brown@smith.co.uk  
**Cc:** kevin.watts@smith.co.uk  
**Subject:** Financial reports

Dear Clare

I have not received the financial reports.

Forward them as soon as possible and copy in Kevin.

Regards  
Jean

3.

**To:** all.colleagues@smith.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Use of meeting-room

Dear All,

It is unacceptable to leave used cups and other waste in the meeting-room, as per staff regulation 9.12.

Regards  
Jean

4.

**To:** james.croft@smith.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Health & Safety Compliance

Dear James

You are required to sign the Health & Safety Compliance forms.

I have them here.

Regards  
Jean

5.

**To:** all.colleagues@smith.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Parking reminder

Dear All,

Parking in the company carpark is entirely forbidden except in your designated space.

Regards  
Jean

6.

**To:** mary.norton@smith.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Supper

Dear Mary

Denis and I much appreciated supper on Thursday. The food was of a high standard, and your husband Tom was pleasant company. It was interesting to meet you in a different environment from the office.

Felicitations on the birth of your grandchild!

Regards  
Jean

# Are we *too* 'soft'?

**When you want to say**

**it's better to say**

I don't have a clue what you're on about

"So what you're saying is"

Will you ever finish talking?

"That's very interesting"

If you let me get a word in I'd have said it myself

"My point entirely"

No

"Yes but"

You're being a bit foolish

"With respect"

You're being more than a bit foolish

"With the greatest respect"

Any more trouble and I'll stick one on you

"I don't want to fall out over this"

Politeness – or false friendliness? We're not suggesting you become too cynical, but there are times when you need to read between the lines (i.e. understand the subtext).

What you see here is a more cynical view. Don't be put off using any of the phrases, but be aware what they might mean. They could of course be taken at face value, and the speaker really means what he or she says. Your call.

**If your boss says**

**S/he may mean**

"It's not quite what we're looking for"

The answer is no

"I really appreciate the hours you have put into this"

I'm looking for someone to rescue this

"What's the consensus view?"

Does everyone agree with me?

"I won't impose an agenda from the MD's chair"

If you step out of line you're history

"This is a great opportunity"

You'll be working through the weekend

"This has all been very worthwhile"

Thank goodness that's over

Give two meanings (one literal or face-value, and the other implied):

- a) he can be a bit difficult
- b) don't call us – we'll call you
- c) I've nothing against him personally
- d) he's had a few drinks
- e) his performance could be better
- f) tell him where to go

# A business on the move

An executive talks about the relocation of an office from Bristol to Swindon. Fill the gaps with one of these words

allowances    vicinity    factors    convenient    recruit    costs  
expectations    confirmation    commuting    access    outcome

“A couple of years ago the company decided to relocate its offices from north Bristol to Swindon. The reasons for this were twofold: cheaper property costs and improved \_\_\_\_\_ to London and Europe.

However, last week at a meeting with the Managing Director we learned that the \_\_\_\_\_ has not been as successful as hoped. Three \_\_\_\_\_ have contributed to this:

Firstly, a number of our employees lived in Somerset, south of Bristol, where they are settled with children at school and so on. Despite generous relocation \_\_\_\_\_, some have found Swindon too far for daily \_\_\_\_\_ and have since moved jobs. We have lost a number of our best skilled workers and experienced managers, and the company has found it difficult to \_\_\_\_\_ people in the new \_\_\_\_\_ with similar qualifications and skills.

Secondly, access to London has improved, but access to Europe has not. Heathrow Airport is far less \_\_\_\_\_ than Bristol Airport, more crowded, with more frequent flight delays and with higher parking \_\_\_\_\_.

And finally, our latest major client is based in south Wales, from where we are now thirty miles further away.

So all in all, it is generally agreed that the relocation has not lived up to \_\_\_\_\_. As for the rumour that the board are considering a move back to Bristol, I can offer no \_\_\_\_\_ of this.”

# Your schedule: making appointments

Can we fix a meeting?  
 I need to arrange a meeting with  
 Can we make an appointment for next week?  
 Make a reservation for ...  
 Can we fix a time to get together?  
 Let's schedule a meeting for next week  
 Let's do lunch  
 Let's get together again sometime next week  
 How about tomorrow?  
 How's your diary looking for next week?  
 Do you have a window this afternoon?  
 I can't do Tuesday  
 I've got a slot on Tuesday afternoon  
 Thursday is completely out  
 Can you do the following week?  
 Let's talk it though over the phone  
 I think we need to discuss this face-to-face  
 That week is all booked up  
 I am out of the office tomorrow  
 I am available later in the day  
 I've got something else on



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
0900	█		█		█
1000		█	█		█
1100	█	█	█	█	█
1200	█			█	█
1300					
1400	█	█		█	
1500		█	█		
1600					

## ROLE PLAY

Above is your schedule for next week. A supplier (your teacher) will telephone you to arrange a two-hour meeting. The times you have unavailable are blocked out.

Draft an email confirming the arrangement. You know this supplier quite well.

# Your schedule: changing appointments

To someone you know quite well

**To:** terry.pickering@topstuff.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Meeting

Hi Terry

Just to confirm our meeting tomorrow night.

See you at 7.

Thanks

Jim

To someone you do not know

**To:** marjorie.smith@interland.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Meeting with Mr Stubbs

Dear Marjorie

I write to confirm the arrangement for my meeting with Derek Stubbs in Bristol tomorrow at the Grand Hotel. We are meeting at 8.30pm in the Language Suite.

With regards  
Jim Standing

**I'm afraid I can't do Tuesday. Any chance we can put it off till Thursday ?**



I'm sorry but I must change our appointment  
Any chance of rearranging our meeting?  
Can we change the time of our meeting  
I'm sorry but I have to postpone our meeting  
I need to put off our meeting today  
I'm afraid I can't do Tuesday.  
Any chance we can put it off till Thursday?  
Can we reschedule for next week?  
Something has come up  
Please give me a call when you have a moment  
I'll have to get back to you  
I'm afraid I've double booked myself that day...  
Unfortunately I need to cancel our meeting.

## ROLE PLAY

Having made the arrangement on the previous page, now your boss has asked you to attend an important meeting at the time you have arranged to meet this supplier. Telephone the supplier to rearrange the appointment, still to fit with the schedule below.

Write another email to your supplier confirming the new time.

# Newspapers

Most newspapers use short words in titles so large type can be used to attract attention.

Match the headline with the correct sentence:

**Bank chief  
in PM snub**

**TV ditch  
top soap**

**Drugs giant in  
cash bid**

**Sack ref says  
expert**

**Toff in  
aid row**

**Star slams  
TV critic**

**MPs face rap  
for jobs**

1. Former ambassador Sir Charles Addlestrop has been criticised by the Ethiopian government for failing to distribute emergency UN food supplies across the country.

2. Sandy Pearce, a victim of the attack on Pullings estate, south London, said that ASBOs were wholly inadequate. "People in Parliament should come and live down on our estate. Then they'll know what's what around here".

3. Channel Culture announced today that the award-winning show 'Up Your Street' was moving towards an exciting finale this autumn. Sources close to the company indicate that Jerry is going to marry Sue before being murdered in the bath by Liz, the lover of Pat. There are no plans for a second series.

4. Gordon Brown denied today that former Treasury supremo Eric Clutterbuck had been demoted. "All along it has been this government's policy to review fiscal supervision and how the levers of management are best controlled. Eric continues to have an important part to play in this government's financial policy-making."

5. Football TV panellist Chris Dribblesworth believes that computers will soon be able to referee football matches.

6. Pharmaceutical company Fizzicon is seeking major European funding as part of a new research initiative to combat a range of diseases.

7. Actress Gloria Sending told BBC radio that she had not yet seen the review of her appearance in 'Up Your Street' which compared her performance with that of 'a half-dead zombie'. "My job is to act," she said. "I don't have the time or the inclination to read the rubbish they write in newspaper columns."

## More news ...

### UK to join the USA

The UK has formally applied to become a state of the United States of America, a source close to the Prime Minister revealed this afternoon. Once the Government had formally acquired the permission of the Queen, the issue was never in doubt. The Royal Family has agreed to take up residence in Disneyland, Florida, and the US will continue to decide matters of British foreign policy.

### Business news

Smiths Ltd have been taken over by American company Hanks Hardware in a behind-the-scenes deal involving seven Smiths directors who are also on the board of Hanks. One shrugged off accusations of selling out to the Americans: 'My £70m bonus is performance-related. This company is over here doing rather well over there: this is good news for Britain,' he said from his Florida home which sports a union jack. The original UK workforce of 1300 will be replaced with 200 Filipinos who will work round-the-clock shifts.

### More trouble at Buzzoff

Where will it end? First the calves for veal, then the halibut, now wasps," said a spokesman for insecticide manufacturers Buzzoff UK, whose spray manufacturing plant was burned to the ground last week.

Expert advisors to the Pentagon believe the upsurge of animal rights activity is part of a wider strategy to destabilize human society – orchestrated by whales. Officials would not be drawn into whether a joint UN Whaling Force had been set up, but George Thompson Jr told reporters there was no question of the larger mammals infiltrating human society while he was US Defense Secretary.

Discuss with your teacher the different British newspapers, including tabloids and broadsheets.

Which paper best covers things of interest to you?

Which newspaper or magazine offers a guide to entertainment and activities in your area?

Newspapers are a primary source of information, and yet often get it wrong. Discuss with your teacher other sources of information that are available (e.g. web, radio, TV).

Read the news cuttings with your teacher and explain the meaning of words underlined.

### Blair apology row rumbles on

French descendants of victims of the battle of Agincourt, in which thousands of French knights died at the hands of British forces, are enraged by Tony Blair's refusal to apologise yesterday. 'I regret what happened, of course I do,' said a sombre PM. 'But look, you know, I mean hey, there are sensitivities on both sides. The preliminary findings of the government report, which I commissioned, demonstrates that there are many thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, who can claim genetic descent from the men this country lost at the battle of Hastings in 1066.'

A French official insisted that President Chirac had already apologised for Hastings. 'The President is not obliged to apologise to you again today, because if you please he was desolated yesterday when the media was in another place.'

**Brussels:** In a further round of apologies last night European ministers agreed to rebuild Carthage.

### Terrorists crack codes

Western intelligence believes Al Qaeda have cracked key military codes. A spokesman for the Centre for Espionage Studies in Swindon would not comment on the use of Latin by Nato forces, but did confirm that they had evidence of hostile countries in the middle east engaging in prolific training in this former top language.

Government officials are investigating an unnamed British company which is exporting crash courses in conversational Latin from a Bristol address.

## Depending on your point of view...

These pairs of words and phrases express different attitudes to potentially the same things. A person who appears 'extravagant' to one person can seem 'generous' to another. Discuss with your teacher how to use these words.

cheap	good value
vague	approximate
bureaucratic	official
dated	traditional
trendy	up-to-date
extravagant	generous
exaggerate	emphasise
show off	impress
mean	prudent
reckless	bold
restless	energetic
flash	smart
scruffy	casual
sycophantic	loyal
fussy	precise
sales spiel	product information
inflexible	principled
stubborn	independent
follows the crowd	team-player

One article comes from *The Twigworth Times*, the other from the *Sandhurst Sports Supplement*. Can you see which is which?

Fans cheered Twigworth Rovers off the pitch after they earned a replay in this epic cup match at Gloucester Park on Saturday. Playing into a strong wind in the first half the home side conceded two goals as Sandhurst United continued their good form in the league.

After a rousing halftime talk by coach Dave Sadler, the Rovers came out fighting and turned the game round when Archie Grimes scored with a spectacular volley in the 80th minute. Then in the dying minutes Tommy Spindler was brought down in the area by Sandhurst captain Neil Simmonds, and Kevin Starbright stepped up to score from the spot to level the score. Sandhurst manager Tim Crichton vented his frustration about the penalty as the teams left the field, and was warned by the referee for using abusive language.

Despite being 2-0 up at halftime Sandhurst had to settle for a draw in this Severnside cup fixture. From the start Sandhurst moved the ball around intelligently, and took control of this local derby when Pete Thomas headed home from a Nick Jones cross on the left. After halftime the winds made the game a lottery as both sides floundered on Twigworth's rain-soaked pitch, before Twigworth scored twice late into the match – the second a controversial penalty – to earn a replay at Sandhurst. "The Twigworth lad fell over in the mud," said Sandhurst coach Tim Crichton.

The match video clearly shows the Twigworth striker tripping over his own feet, but the Sandhurst boss remained sanguine. "That's football," said the former Derby County midfielder. "You get decisions like this, we all do. The ref had an off day. It can happen. Now we've got to go out and do it again when Twigworth come to our place next week."

# Presentations

It's cheaper to run, no vandalism or theft, no threat of terrorists, absolutely no traffic problems, and you can park where you like ...

## RELOCATE TO ANTARCTICA

- Low overheads
- Zero crime rate
- Terrorist-proof
- No traffic queues
- Unlimited car-parking



A presentation is the ideal moment for tired executives to drop off to sleep. The lights are low, the topic full of key statistics and dull percentages and, well, the lunch was good and before you know it they're asleep.

### TIP

When you give a presentation with text or bullet points on a display, as you talk use **different words** from the words in the text.

So keep your talk lively and engage your audience with eye contact and with your infectious enthusiasm! And use different words in your talk from the words in the display.

When you are listening to a presentation in the UK, be cautious of checking your phone messages or giving your attention to things other than the speaker. It may cause offence. At presentations in some other countries, people who don't want to listen even open up their laptops and check their emails. British people giving a presentation may think that they are being a bit boring if the attention of their audience wanders ...

# Presentations

Imagine you are giving a presentation on each of the topics below. Put in your own words the bullet points: without using the words that are underlined.

**SALES PLAN**  
next 12 months

Focus sales on China

Recruit an agent in Shanghai


Analyse ongoing market trends in China

**EXAMPLE**

Concentrate our sales effort on China

Set up an agent in Shanghai

Watch how the market develops in China



Do not exceed budget

Product development to be consumer-driven

Increase global production by 25%

Reduce transport costs

Cultural diversity training for all staff

Develop a team-orientated culture within the group

Focus on e-sales  
Incentivise internet purchases

Outsource customer services

# Presentations

As mentioned before, you will notice the habit of British people to approximate when they are discussing times, amounts and other details. For instance if a clock says '10.02' they may say 'Just gone ten o'clock'. To express '47%' they might say 'Just under half'.

Summarise last year's sales of ladies' footwear at SHOES-R-US, giving approximate figures and without using a %.

## SHOES -R- US

### Ladies Sales 2005

25% high-heeled shoes  
20% trainers  
20% knee-high boots  
10% ankle boots  
10% sandals  
15% other

## TWO-YEAR PLAN

Achieve 100% sales increase within two years

Improve synergies across the global group

Implement linguistic and cultural training for all international teams

Upgrade all software applications

## ROLE PLAY

Imagine you are a senior executive of a multinational organisation.

Give a short talk introducing the Two-Year Plan. The people attending will see the display (left), so try to use different words that get the same message across but in a more informal way.

# Buying Services

Fergusons Ltd  
Baltimore Street, Majortown MD4 3PQ

14 September 2006

Janice Smith  
Smiths Cleaning Services  
32 Oldacre Grove  
Oldtown SF4 6PL

**Re: service-cleaning of offices in Baltimore Street**

Dear Mrs Smith

Thank you for visiting Fergusons on Friday. As per our conversation please submit a tender in writing for the contract of the office-cleaning at Baltimore Street.

The cleaning will be of all the rooms on both floors, WCs, corridors and reception area five days per week. As discussed, once each week the windows are to be cleaned and air-freshener products serviced as necessary. Handtowels, soaps and WC accessories to be provided and serviced as necessary.

Please confirm your annual price, fixed and firm, and let us have a copy of your standard terms and conditions.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

*Peter Simms*

Peter Simms  
Office Manager

The office cleaner for Fergusons has retired.

Peter Simms has to hire a new cleaner.

Two suppliers have visited his office, and here he writes to them both asking for their prices.

How do the two letters differ?

Fergusons Ltd  
Baltimore Street, Majortown MD4 3PQ

15 September 2006

Will Popham  
Corporate Cleansing Services Ltd  
Unit 6, Apsley Business Park  
Oldtown SF5 6KL

**Re: service-cleaning of offices in Baltimore Street**

Dear Will

Thank you for your time yesterday and for your samples and information. As per our conversation please now submit a tender in writing for the contract of the office-cleaning here at Baltimore Street.

The cleaning will be of all the rooms on both floors, WCS, corridors and reception area five days per week. As discussed, each week the windows are to be cleaned and linen changed and laundered and air-freshener products serviced as necessary. Handtowels, soaps and WC accessories to be provided and serviced as necessary. I appreciate your guidance on environmentally sound products as you showed me at our meeting.

Please confirm your annual price, fixed and firm, and let us have a copy of your standard terms and conditions.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

*Peter Simms*

Peter Simms  
Office Manager

# Buying Services

## Smiths Cleaning Services

32 Oldacre Grove      Oldtown      SF4 6PL

23rd Sept 2006,

Mr Peter Simms,  
Office Manager,  
Fergusons Ltd,  
Baltimore Street,  
Majortown MD4 3PQ,

**Cleaning offices in Baltimore Street.**

Dear Mr Simms,

I enclose our proposal for the cleaning of your offices, as requested. Our charge is £175 per week inclusive of standard cleaning supplies.

If you require any more information or details please let me know.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

**Janice Smith**

Janice Smith

What do you imagine to be the differences between Smiths Cleaning Services and CCS Ltd?

Corporate Cleansing Services Ltd  
Unit 6, Apsley Business Park  
Oldtown SF5 6KL  
[www.ccs.com](http://www.ccs.com)

21 Sept 2006

Peter Simms  
Office Manager  
Fergusons Ltd  
Baltimore Street  
Majortown MD4 3PQ

***Specialist corporate cleansing service***

Dear Peter

It was a pleasure to meet you last week. I here enclose our proposal for CCS Ltd to provide a full professional cleaning service in your offices.

Our team of professional cleaners are supported with the latest cleansing technology. All our products are tested to be environmentally sustainable. The cost of our service is £996 + VAT per month.

If you need any more information I shall be delighted to help. It will be a pleasure to work in partnership with Fergusons.

Yours sincerely

**Will**

Will Popham  
Regional Manager  
[will.popham@ccs.co.uk](mailto:will.popham@ccs.co.uk)

# Buying Services

**To:** will.popham@ccs.com  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning quotation

Dear Will

Thank you for your proposal received on 22nd Sept. We shall be considering your offer and will contact you when a decision has been made.

With best wishes

Peter Simms  
Office Manager  
Fergusons Ltd

You are Peter Simms. Write an email to your MD, Jenny Powell, explaining to her the two options.

**To:** janicesmith02@hotmail.com  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning quotation

Dear Janice

Thank you for your proposal received today. We shall be considering your offer and will contact you when a decision has been made.

With best wishes

Peter Simms  
Office Manager  
Fergusons Ltd

**To:** peter.simms@fergusons.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning - Baltimore St

Dear Peter

Thank you for your time on the phone yesterday.

You mentioned your holiday in France - As it happens we do an air freshener odour under the title 'Rustic France'! I shall be delighted to send you samples.

Best regards  
Will

Will Popham  
Regional Manager  
CCS Ltd

**CCS ... caring for *your* environment**

**To:** janicesmith02@hotmail.com  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning quotation

Dear Janice

Thank you for your call yesterday.

I do apologise for the delay - the MD has been out of the country for a few days. I shall contact you as soon as a decision has been made.

One issue that staff do raise - Can you confirm whether your products are tested for the environment?

Kind regards  
Peter

Peter Simms  
Office Manager  
Fergusons Ltd

Your tutor is Janice Smith. She telephones you (Peter) to ask what you mean about testing for the environment and reassures you that all her cleaning materials have stood the test of time.

# Buying Services

You want to hire a cleaner to clean your home on a weekly basis. Draft an email to a cleaning company asking for costs and information about their services.

Fergusons Ltd  
Baltimore Street, Majortown MD4 3PQ

16 October 2006

Will Popham  
Corporate Cleansing Services Ltd  
Unit 6, Apsley Business Park  
Oldtown SF5 6KL

**Re: service-cleaning of offices in Baltimore Street**

Dear Will

I am pleased to confirm that Fergusons wish to use the cleaning services of CCS. I understand that it is a twelve-month contract and Fergusons have the right to cancel the contract in the first 30 days if not fully satisfied.

Congratulations, and we look forward to making a start in November.

Yours sincerely

*Peter*

Peter Simms  
Office Manager

Fergusons Ltd  
Baltimore Street, Majortown MD4 3PQ

17 October 2006

Janice Smith  
Smiths Cleaning Services  
32 Oldacre Grove  
Oldtown SF4 6PL

**Re: service-cleaning of offices in Baltimore Street**

Dear Janice

Thank you for your proposal and the work you have put in to the preparation of your tender.

After much consideration by the directors I regret that we have decided on this occasion to use the services of another supplier.

Thank you again for your interest.

Yours sincerely

*Peter Simms*

Peter Simms  
Office Manager

The cleaning cost for your home is too much. Write another email to the same company thanking them, but explain you will not be going ahead.

# Buying Services

**To:** peter.simms@fergusons.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning - Baltimore St

Dear Peter

Many apologies - I was at an exhibition all day yesterday and did not receive your message from the office until now.

I have spoken to the people concerned, and I am sure this will not occur again.

Best wishes  
Will

**CCS ... caring for *your* environment**

You work for Fergusons. One morning you find your office with rubbish still in view, tables dirty and the floor not cleaned. Write an email to Peter Simms, the office manager.

**To:** peter.simms@fergusons.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning - Baltimore St

Peter,

My sincere apologies. I will sort this immediately. It may take a day or two, as there are rules and regulations of recruitment we have to observe. One issue is beyond our control - we are not permitted to demand that any particular language is spoken.

But I'm sure this will be resolved quickly. Again, many apologies.

Will

**CCS ... caring for *your* environment**

**To:** will.popham@ccs.com  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning quotation

Dear Will

Further to my call to your colleague this morning, please note that three of the offices were not cleaned last night. I understand there were illnesses among the staff. However, I ask for CCS to make sure absentees are covered to ensure full and proper services are carried out.

I look forward to hearing from you.

With thanks

Peter

**To:** will.popham@ccs.com  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning quotation

Dear Will

More problems to report I'm afraid.

Some of my colleagues working in the evening found it difficult to communicate with your staff. The cleaners were unable to change the waste bag of the vacuum-cleaner, and it turned out that none of them spoke English.

Can this be rectified as soon as possible?

Peter

**To:** will.popham@ccs.com  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning quotation

Dear Will

The offices were not cleaned at all on Thursday or Friday evenings last week. Can you confirm that anyone attended?

We need to have this resolved as soon as possible.

Peter

Peter Simms  
Office Manager  
Fergusons Ltd

# Buying Services

**To:** peter.simms@fergusons.co.uk  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning - Baltimore St

Dear Mr Simms

Thank you for your email. Please be assured that your concerns are being attended to.

Also to let you know that Will Popham has left the company and your account is being looked after by Dave Usborne. Dave is on leave until Monday and will contact you immediately on his return.

With best wishes  
Sandra Poole  
Services Supervisor  
CCS Ltd

CCS ... caring for *your* environment

25 November 2006

Sandra Poole  
Services Supervisor  
Corporate Cleansing Services Ltd  
Unit 6, Apsley Business Park  
Oldtown SF5 6KL

**Re: service-cleaning contract - Baltimore Street**

Dear Ms Poole

I regret to say that we are obliged to cancel our contract with CCS while still entitled so to do.

With immediate effect, we require no further services from CCS Ltd.

Yours sincerely

*Peter Simms*

Peter Simms  
Office Manager

You are Dave Usborne of CCS, now back from holiday. Telephone Peter Simms (your teacher) to see if you can call in and restart things more positively.

**To:** janicesmith02@hotmail.com  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Office cleaning quotation

Dear Janice

There has been a change of strategy here at Fergusons, and I am pleased to report that our MD has asked me to offer you the cleaning contract here at Fergusons.

If you are still in a position to offer this service, can you ring me to discuss how we might take this forward.

With best wishes  
Peter

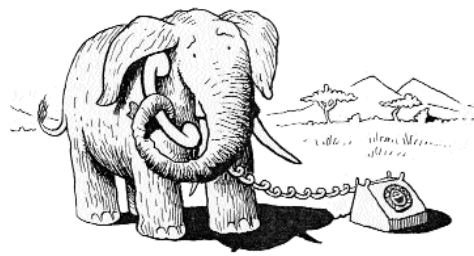
Mob - 04567 689245

Peter Simms  
Office Manager  
Fergusons Ltd

Review the pages of Buying Services and discuss with your teacher any phrases you may find useful.

# On the phone

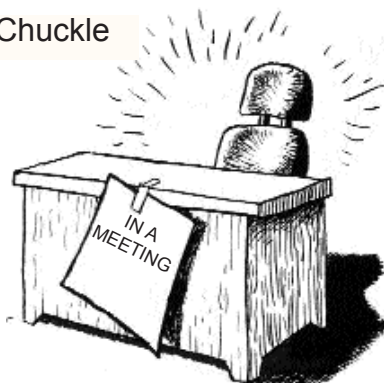
Your teacher rings for your colleague Derek Thompson, who is working at the next desk.



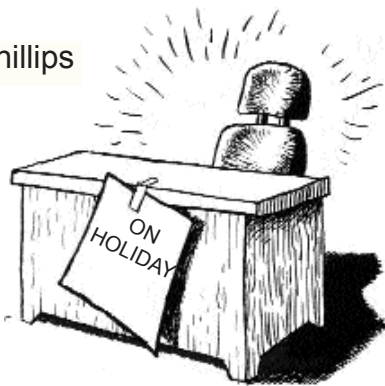
Your teacher is trying to ring Bristol Zoo. Explain she/he has the wrong number.

You are the only person in the office this morning and have to look after the switchboard. You take calls for each of these colleagues. Explain where they are – or make excuses – and take a message :

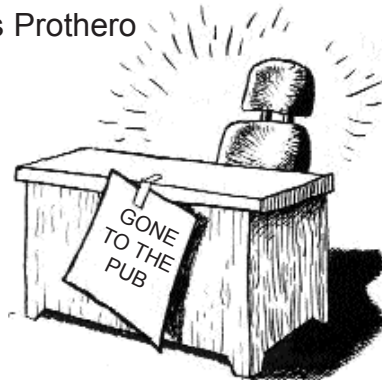
Liz Chuckle



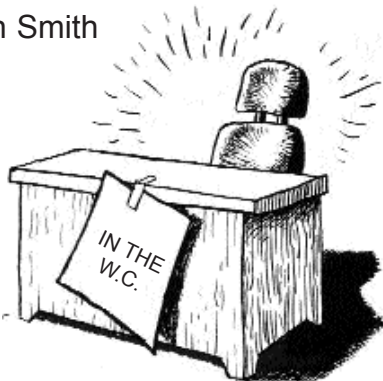
Clare Phillips



Denis Prothero



Simon Smith



How many of these expressions did you use?

What is it in connection with?

I will try his line

I'll see if he's available ... one moment please

I am afraid she/he is ... not in the office

... on the other line

... in a meeting

... unavailable at the moment

... not at his/her desk

... on another call

... tied up at the moment

Can I take a message?

Please give me your name and number

I'll get him/her to call you back

I'll tell him/her you called

You receive a series of 'cold-call' sales calls from various companies trying to sell a range of things ... insurance, holidays, roof insulation ... (Your teacher plays all these parts). Politely bring each conversation to an end as quickly as possible.

# An email inbox

These are emails to Tom Phillips on one afternoon ...

Dear Tom,

I attach the Food Toxicity stats as per your request. Please let me know if you want any further information.

Regards  
Jerry Smith

Hi Tom,

Can't wait till this evening. Shall we bring a bottle ?

See you later,

Jennie and Phil

Tom,

It's okay, I'll do parents' evening ... but be home by 7 - we need the barbecue for 8.  
xx  
Susie

Dear Tom,

I have read your report on the salmonella incident. Had you finished it ? And why am I mentioned on page 2? Are you planning to send this as a final document to the Health & Safety people ?

Andrew

Write an email to Andrew, saying that the document has been sent, and you will meet him in the morning.

Arrange these four sign-offs in order of formality:

**With best wishes**

**All best**

**xxx**

**Yours sincerely**

Think of more with your teacher.

Dear Mr Phillips,

Thank you very much for the information you emailed through. I shall look at it over the next week or so and reply with comments to you and Mr Andrew Groundhog

With best wishes

Humphrey Jones  
Regional Advisor  
Health & Safety Inspectorate

hi dad !

got a free this afternoon to finish coursework ... but clares computer is more fun! i cant wait till august 3rd - have u done your shopping?!! can u take me + friends to see a film?

mom says youre doing bbq tonite - suasages pleeeeeease!!!!

xxxxxx mouse

Dear Tom,

I tried to ring - just to let you know that Andrew wants to see you. I've set up a meeting for 9.30 am.

Let me know if not OK.

Thanks  
Jo

**DO NOT PARK YOUR CAR IN THE DIRECTORS' CAR SPACES. THESE ARE RESERVED AREAS.**

Trevor Sykes  
Reception  
Fricken Chicken

Rewrite this email from reception with a softer tone but the same message.

What sort of information do you think is best conveyed by email?

# Finding a job

## Marketing Manager, SW London

Dynamic, motivated marketing & sales manager required to join exciting London-based PR firm. You will have at least three years' experience in public relations. Most of all, you will be a team player with the ability to meet deadlines and generate fresh ideas at a moment's notice! Send CV & letter to: Arthur Shilling Associates, 32-36 Exhibition Road, London SW9 1QE by April 22.

## OFFICE MANAGER

*needed by one of Twigworth's most innovative legal firms: to supervise and develop cost-effective administrative technology and support all levels of the business. The successful applicant will have good interpersonal skills, strong IT skills and a proven 'hands-on' management approach. Some experience in the legal profession an advantage.*

*To apply please send CV and covering letter to:  
Sue de Panzov, Libel & Slander Solicitors  
22 The Grove, Twigworth, GLOS GL22 9UJ.*

## HR MANAGER South-east 52k + bonuses

BMP is currently recruiting an HR manager to head up a busy & vibrant team at our Personnel Centre in Godalming. If you possess a minimum of five years' experience in team leadership, and would like the challenge of heading up the HR team of one of the South-East's major growth companies, then apply in writing, enclosing a CV and covering letter, to: Recruitment Department, Beefy's Meat Packaging, Unit 46, Downs View Trading Est., Godalming, GU11 8JV by April 22.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

£24k + per annum

The University of Berkshire is currently recruiting an Administrative Assistant to support the major increase in demand for courses in classical languages. No previous experience in university administration is necessary (though an ability to read Latin or ancient Greek is an advantage).

For an application pack please send SAE to: The Department of Discontinued Languages, University of Berkshire, PO Box 62. Please note: unsuccessful candidates may not be contacted.

**POULTRY PRODUCTION MANAGER.** Poultry meats company are seeking to recruit a production manager to handle all stages of production and distribution for our widely-known chicken products. You will need to be hard-working with a desire to go places in a fowl business. Apply to: Chicken Fricken, PO Box 456, Leicester LE13 4EU.

**ENGLISH TEACHERS** urgently needed to teach operators of nuclear power plant in UK. Best rates. Hours negotiable. Call Liz on 07894 67890.

**DOORMAN WANTED.** Popular bar seeks security staff to supervise club entrance. Strong physical presence necessary. Must have own warm coat. See to: Security Manager, Slap 'n' Tickle Niteclub, 23 King Street, BRISTOL BS1 3FY.

**HAIR STYLIST** required for busy town-centre hairdresser. Apply to Miss A. Snipp, Curls, Westgate, Gloucester.

**BAR STAFF REQUIRED.** Female bar staff (18-30) required to work in lively town-centre nitespot. Must be bubbly, friendly, GSOH. Experience in bar work not essential. Three photos & see to: The Manager, Slap 'n' Tickle Niteclub, 23 King Street, BRISTOL BS1 3FY.

**BRAIN SURGEON** needed to lead team of specialist medics in the Notional Health Service. Apply to your local Notional Health Service Centre.

**AIRCRAFT WING DESIGNER** Andy - you sent your CV in last week. Please contact us again.

## Hi! Calling all creatives!

Are you a dynamic creative-free-thinker with at least six weeks experience in the industry?

We're looking for an individual, a character, someone a bit *quirky*! If that's you, then how-do-you-do!

Apply today to join the team that produced the cream biccie ads on Channel 6 with the desk sergeant from ITV's Inspector Crust!

**Shoot Now** is a fresh exciting advertising agency based in the East Midlands. Clients include Yuk Biscuits, HM Coventry Prison, and Snuff Waste Solutions. Send a CV plus photo, plus portfolio of your most recent ad campaign, to: Kenny Stopp, Shoot Now, PO Box 59, NG9 4NB.

## LIP SERVICE

Top facial cosmetics company seeks sales executive due to continual growth in our sales worldwide. The successful candidate will be based primarily in our UK office in Swindon, but must be willing to travel on a regular basis within the UK and in Europe for customer visits and exhibitions. Experience in the cosmetic industry would be an advantage, but some sales and marketing experience is essential.

Salary + commission  
CV to [jobs@lipservice.co.uk](mailto:jobs@lipservice.co.uk)

# Finding a job

1. Imagine that your teacher has successfully applied for one of the jobs advertised on the previous page. She/he talks about the job without telling you directly what it is. Can you see which job your teacher is doing ?

2. Your teacher will now apply for a different one of these jobs. She/he gives you a short resumé of her/his career to date, qualifications, interests and life goals.

You are the interviewer. Ask questions about the applicant's experience and qualifications:

- "What appeals most about this job?"
- "Why do you think you are well-suited for this position?"
- "Why do you want to leave your current job?"
- "What did you like most about your last job?"
- "What was the most difficult experience?"

Do you think the applicant will be suitable? If not, tactfully explain this to the applicant.

3. Design a recruitment advertisement for your own job.

4. Write a letter of application for one of these jobs.

5. Find a job for these two people.

In the UK many pupils leave school after taking their GCSEs (exams in all subjects at the age of 16). About half will stay at school for another two years and take first AS levels then A levels (usually in three subjects) with the hope of progressing to a university or college where they will take a course in one subject leading to a degree (BA or BSc).

## CHRIS THOMPSON

CV

Date of birth: 27 April 1979  
Nationality: British  
Marital Status: Single

### WORK EXPERIENCE

May 2005 - Current Fietto Shoes Ltd.

#### SHOE SALES EXECUTIVE

Account Manager selling Italian-designed shoes to Down at Heel, Strapped for Cash and other chains. Maintaining existing companies and developing new contacts. Operating in south of England.

October 2002 - May 2005 Top That  
HAIR ENHANCEMENT SALES EXECUTIVE

Executive stylist with fast-growing company specialising in hirsute fashions for both genders. Responsible for maintaining existing clients (e.g. NHS).

October 1997 - September 2001

Hair stylist for Giovanni's in Bristol. Responsible for cutting and styling gentlemen's hair; responsible for managing premises, cash transactions, managing bookings, administration and supervision.

### EDUCATION

1990-1995 St Peters, Swindon  
GCSEs (Maths, English, History, French, Combined Sciences, DT)  
Played rugby for Wiltshire Under 18s  
1995-6 Swindon College of Art & Design  
City & Guilds in Style & People

### INTERESTS and HOBBIES

Boxing, judo, weightlifting, rugby, football, rock music (own drum kit)  
Frequent trips to Mediterranean

### ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Internet, email, facebook; MS Word and Excel; Full driving licence

## Jane Palmer

Curriculum Vitae

Address: 11a Elizabeth Mews, Edinburgh, EH4 6PS  
Telephone No: 0997507878

Date of birth: 12 January 1979  
Nationality: Scottish  
Marital Status: living with partner (no children)

### PERSONAL OBJECTIVES

I am an outgoing person who enjoys responsibility and working with teams. I have experience of running a successful business. I am now looking for a change of direction to engage my energy and enthusiasm, and my goal is to be part of a successful enterprise, helping to achieve the best possible outcomes.

### PROFESSIONAL CAREER

Jan 1997 - April 1999

Office Administrator, Palmer & Co Estate Agents, Edinburgh.  
General supervision of office employees and supplies.  
Recruitment, administrating PAYE payroll.  
Invoicing clients and banking duties.

September 1999-2004

Set up and managed own business 'Mrs Jeeves', cleaning people's houses.  
Managed a team of cleaners and one maintenance worker/decorator.  
Cleaned more than a hundred houses, including politicians and celebrities.

### EDUCATION

1987 - 1993 St Agatha's School for Girls, Montrose.  
GCSEs 9 A\*, 2A  
1994-6 Edinburgh Sixth Form College.  
A levels French, History, Art

### PERSONAL INTERESTS & ACTIVITIES

Travelling, writing, entertaining, theatre, reading, animals, music

# Phrasal verbs

English is littered with expressions that include a preposition (e.g. on time, in-house, off the record, under the radar, over the top, out-of-bounds ...)

Some English verbs are used with prepositions (or adverbs if there is no noun to follow) creating what we call 'phrasal verbs'. These expressions are at the heart of the language, often using old verbs like **be** or **get** or **take**.

You can **get off** a bus, you can **get on** a bus, and you can even **get off on** a bus. You can **take off** at Heathrow, **take off** your trousers and also **take off** the Prime Minister. You **chop down** a tree and then afterwards **chop it up** (into smaller pieces).

So do not expect too much logic ... Take each one as it comes and start to use those you like and feel confident with. For comprehension purposes, you will need to be able to recognise most that appear here.

There is plenty of practice with phrasal verbs over the next few pages. Start by going through the exercises on this page with your teacher.

Replace the words in italics with an expression on the right:

She *is departing* ..... already. What time did she *arrive* ..... ? She is *disappointed* ..... because her promotion does not appear to have *been successful* ..... . Someone in the audience actually *went to sleep* ..... during her talk.

**dropped off**  
**fed up**  
**turn up**  
**come off**  
**is off**

Replace the phrasal verbs in bold with other verbs with similar meanings:

What did he **make of** her proposal to forbid anyone under the age of sixty to attend a football match abroad? Is he going to **turn it down**? If he **thinks it through** he will see that she **has come up** with an excellent idea. We cannot expect other countries to **put up with** our hooligans any longer. If we want to **keep in with** our European partners, never mind retain some national dignity, we have no choice but to **go along with** the plan.

Explain the meaning of these phrasal verbs

In business we **shop around** for competitive quotes, **put up** our prices, **cut back** costs, **weigh up** options, **come up with** new ideas and **put** the increase in ice-cream sales **down to** the hot weather.

# Phrasal verbs

Choose the correct phrasal verb for each gap

## Phrasal verbs are used in ... RELATIONSHIPS

fall out with  
get on with  
let down  
go along with

Do you  
..... your  
neighbours?

HAVE A GOOD RAPPORT WITH

He has  
..... his  
mother-in-law.

ARGUED WITH

Does she  
.....  
the proposal?

AGREE WITH

Unfortunately  
his behaviour has  
..... us all .....

FAILED

## Phrasal verbs are used in ... COMMUNICATION

get across  
take in  
speak up  
be on about

Please  
.....

SPEAK MORE LOUDLY

What ..... he  
..... ?

SAYING

There was so  
much information I could  
not ..... it all .....

COMPREHEND

In a short  
presentation, try to .....  
the key ideas.

EXPRESS

## Phrasal verbs are used in ... SUCCESS and FAILURE

come off  
turn up  
turn out  
fall through  
talk up

Don't worry,  
something will .....  
for the better.

HAPPEN/ARISE

I have to say, I  
never thought it would  
.....!

SUCCEED

How did it  
..... ?

I.E. WHAT WAS THE RESULT

Yes, I'm afraid their  
working partnership has  
.....

COLLAPSED

Look, don't be so negative.  
Nothing will work if you don't think it will. We all  
need to be more positive and ..... our chances  
of success.

SPEAK WITH MORE CONFIDENCE ABOUT SOMETHING

# Phrasal verbs

## Phrasal verbs are used in ... THINKING

weigh up  
put down to  
make of  
come up with  
have in mind

What do you ..... his idea?

I.E. WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSE TO ...

What do you .....?

I.E. WHAT IS YOUR IDEA?

She has ..... a possible solution

CREATED/IMAGINED

She ..... his behaviour ..... to exhaustion.

IDENTIFIED THE CAUSE AS

We need to ..... all the different options.

CONSIDER

## Phrasal verbs in ... MONEY DISCUSSIONS

write off  
shop around  
take over  
cut back

I recommend you ..... for the best deal.

GET SEVERAL COST QUOTES

You wonder whether Sky would like to ..... the BBC.

BUYING A COMPANY

They decided to ..... the costs of repair.

REMOVE FROM CONSIDERATION

I'm afraid we must ..... our expenditure this year.

REDUCE

## Phrasal verbs are used in ... MOVEMENT and TRAVEL

be off  
turn up  
drop in on  
pull in  
come round  
set off

What time did she ..... this morning?

DEPART

If you have a moment, ..... Simon on your way home. He'd love to see you.

A SPONTANEOUS VISIT

Did he bother to ..... today?

ARRIVE/COME

I've been driving for more than three hours. I'm going to ..... at the next service-station.

STOP

Right, I ..... See you later.

I.E. I'M GOING

Supper? Very nice! What time would you like us to .....

ARRIVE/COME

# Phrasal verbs

## Phrasal verbs are used to describe ... FEELINGS

I.E. THINK I COULD COPE

feel up to  
be up for  
be fed up  
get over  
come round to  
get into

She has been given a lot of work to do and can't go out this evening. She .....

DEMORALISED/DISAPPOINTED

I didn't go to the cinema. I didn't ..... it.

MOTIVATED/  
ENTHUSIASTIC

Do you want to give the first presentation? ..... you ..... it?

He'll be fine. Once he manages to ..... the split with his partner he'll be back to normal.

FORGET

I didn't like my job at first, but after a bit I really ..... it

LIKE

Wait till he sees how good it looks. He'll ..... your idea then.

AGREE WITH

## Phrasal verbs in ... DAILY WORK AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

sort out  
look after  
look into  
talk through

We must sit down and ..... the different options

DISCUSS

Someone needs to ..... this ..... now !

RESOLVE

We may need to recruit a new receptionist. I will ..... it today.

EXAMINE

He's the Buyer. He ..... purchasing and vendor selection.

MANAGE

## Phrasal verbs ... ON THE TELEPHONE

put through  
put off  
get through  
get back to  
fix up

Mr Simmons is in today. I'll ..... you .....

CONNECT

I have to ..... my next tutorial

POSTPONE

Let's ..... another time for next week.

ARRANGE

I'll have a look at this and ..... you tomorrow.

RESPOND

She kept trying to ring you all afternoon, but couldn't .....

MAKE CONTACT

# Phrasal verbs

## TO BE in phrasal verbs

Fill each gap with the correct word from the list on the right:

I'm ..... now [leaving]  
Is she ..... ? [present/in the building]  
What are you ..... about ? [saying]  
What do you mean she's not ..... It's midday ! [out of bed]  
We're ..... milk [lack]  
Gloucester are ..... the match against Bath [motivated to play]  
Is he ..... your job ? [wants]  
He can't do it. He's not ..... the work [incapable]

in  
on  
after  
out of  
up to  
off  
up  
up for

Use one of the above phrasal verbs to rephrase each of these sentences:

She is leaving soon [Answer: "She's off soon"]

We have no petrol

Is he capable of doing this?

Is she sufficiently enthusiastic for this?

What time do you rise in the morning?

?

## TO PUT in phrasal verbs

Replace the words in italics with the correct phrasal verb with 'put':

put off      put out      put up      put down      put on  
put down to      put through      put up with

Keith Richard *extinguished* his cigarette before he started to sing.

The neighbours could not *endure* the noise.

Catherine is going to *postpone* our meeting until next week.

George was *dissatisfied by* this restaurant because of the dirty kitchens.

The caller was *connected* to the HR manager.

The injured dog had to be *destroyed*.

All the computer firms have *increased* their prices.

Montse *gives* the weather as a reason for the odd behaviour in the UK.

Whenever we stayed in London, my aunt would *accommodate* us.

The company *gave* an exhibition.

# Phrasal verbs

## TO DO in phrasal verbs

Replace the words in italics with the correct phrasal verb with 'do':

do with

do without

do away with

do up

I cannot *manage without* a cup of tea !  
Let's *end* the rule about taking our shoes off in the office.  
Shall we *decorate* the kitchen ?  
I could *take* a month's holiday – as if !

## TO TAKE in phrasal verbs

Replace the words in italics with the correct phrasal verb with 'take':

take ... out to  
take up

take after  
take off

take back  
take in

The actress refused to *remove* her clothes  
It will be a pleasure for me to *give* you lunch today.  
Clare has *started* mountain-climbing  
I *withdraw* my remarks. I did not mean to cause any offence.  
There is so much English to learn! But I cannot *absorb* everything!  
Martin's plane *leaves* at 8 am.  
Simon *resembles* his father.

Fill each gap with a single word to complete the phrasal verb:

The comedian was always taking ..... John Major.  
My friend Peter has taken ..... golf.  
The American company has taken ..... twelve Irish companies this year already.  
His daughter takes ..... her mother. She was beautiful with long dark hair.  
What time do we take ..... from Heathrow?  
I want to take you ..... on your offer, and now I want to take you ..... to lunch.  
There is so much to learn, I cannot take it all .....

# Phrasal verbs

## TO GET in phrasal verbs

Fill each gap with a single word to complete the phrasal verb:

We get ..... at seven o'clock.  
Get ..... the train at Bristol.  
My sister is getting ..... rock music!  
Do you get ..... your colleagues at work?  
She has not got ..... the loss of her parrot.  
Get the cat ..... the table!  
The meeting will finish at six, so we should get ..... from the office by 6.30.  
Say what you like, but you won't get ..... me that easily!  
Sorry, I haven't done it yet. I'll probably get ..... to it later this week

Replace the words in italics with the correct phrasal verb with 'get':

get back to    get away    get away with (it)    get over    get at  
get through    get on with    get up    get by    get on

Alan *rises* at six-thirty every morning.  
Jane *has a good relationship with* all her students.  
He can *survive* in Russian but not much more.  
George has not *managed to forget* his dog which died last year.  
Can we *afford to* let criminals *remain unpunished for* their crimes?  
We will need to *leave* before dark.  
Thanks for the call. I'll *phone* you back tomorrow.  
I tried to ring her but could not *make contact*.  
What is your point? What are you *suggesting*?  
Brilliant ! But I don't think you will *escape detection*.  
How are you *doing* in your new job ?

## TO LOOK in phrasal verbs

Replace the words in italics with the correct phrasal verb with 'look':

look forward to    look after    look up    look out

*Be careful!* Don't touch the red button.  
We eagerly *anticipate* your arrival.  
The HR manager *supervises* more than two hundred employees.  
I don't know this word. I will *check* it in the dictionary.  
Don't worry, when Tommy first comes to the school, I will *protect* him.

# Phrasal verbs

## Phrasal verbs with more than one meaning

Match the phrasal verb with its meaning on the right:

What time do we **take off** ?  
Please **put** the suitcase **down**  
Will you **put up** the price ?  
I need to **put off** our meeting  
She **put on** a funny voice  
What time shall we **turn up** ?  
I'll **take** some cash **out** of the bank  
Should I **turn down** the collar ?

postpone  
increase  
drop  
arrive  
withdraw  
fold  
leave by aeroplane  
affect/contrive

The same phrasal verbs have a second meaning. Rephrase the sentences below with the phrasal verbs:

put up  
turn up  
take off  
put ... off  
turn down  
take out  
put on  
put down

He tried to humiliate me in front of my friends  
She made the film seem unappealing  
Can I give you dinner ?  
I declined the offer of a job  
I'm going to wear a white suit  
May I remove my jacket ?  
Please increase the sound of the TV  
Where do we erect the tent ?

Identify the one phrasal verb that can be used to express all the meanings in each group:

remove some clothing  
parody  
depart in an aeroplane

Answer:  
"take off"

leave a bag on the floor  
humiliate  
reduce a price  
end the life of a pet

invent a story  
reconcile

increase the CD volume  
arrive  
fold up

postpone  
repel/displease

assemble a tent  
increase the prices  
accommodate someone  
pin a notice on my door

search for a word in a dictionary  
raise your vision upwards  
improve

# Phrasal verbs

## Phrasal verbs with two prepositions

Rewrite the sentences below using one of the phrasal verbs:

put up with      get away with      run out of  
drop in on      fall out with      stand up to  
put down to      get on with      come up with

She explained that the severe floods were because of climate change.  
My brothers have had a bad argument and now don't speak to each other.  
I'll visit you after work tomorrow.  
I admire him because he resists the bullies.  
The car stopped because it had no petrol.  
She has a very good relationship with her boss.  
See if you can think of a solution to this problem.  
He always leaves early but nothing happens because his boss doesn't notice.  
I don't know why you tolerate his idleness.

Explain the difference between

put up with and put up  
fall out with and fall out  
look up to and look up  
get away with and get away  
come up with and come up  
be out of and be out  
stand up to and stand up

and think of examples.

## Disjointed phrasal verbs

With many phrasal verbs the preposition that completes a phrasal verb can come after the object:

**put the meeting off**  
**write the losses off**  
**take my shirt off**  
**turn the light on**

Equally you can say

**put off the meeting**  
etc

But a few have to be one or the other, as the position affects the meaning.

Explain the difference in meaning between each pair

put him off his dinner

put off his dinner

see through his proposal

see his proposal through

# Phrasal verbs

## Phrasal verbs with no object

A few phrasal verbs are used without an object. Rephrase these sentences using a phrasal verb in each one:

She went to sleep in front of the TV  
She was a bit sad that evening.  
The milk is sour.  
What time does the aeroplane leave?  
When do the rest of us leave?  
Yes, he made a mistake !  
I called round but she was absent.

to go off  
to be out  
to be down  
to slip up  
to take off  
to drop off  
to set off

## Phrasal verbs with "it"

The pronoun 'it' is sometimes used in phrasal verbs as any other pronoun:

**"Do you want your coat?"    "- No I'll take it off."**

In some phrasal verbs with 'it', the pronoun has so settled into the expression that what it refers to is not always important.

Discuss the meaning of these phrasal verbs with your teacher.

Think of examples.

Highlight the ones you want to use in the future.

try it on  
come off it !  
can't put my finger on it  
get out of it  
hit it off  
talk it over  
get away with it  
make it up  
see it through  
work it out  
pull it off  
get on with it  
get down to it  
see it through  
put up with it  
be up for it  
talk it through  
get it over with  
be done with it  
put your foot in it  
he's asking for it

# Phrasal verbs

## Phrasal verbs with “up”

Fill each gap with one of the verbs:

We need to \_\_\_\_\_ up a meeting  
What time did they \_\_\_\_\_ up at the office?  
Some salesmen \_\_\_\_\_ it up as they go along.  
Thank you, yes, I'd like to \_\_\_\_\_ up your offer  
What time did you \_\_\_\_\_ up this morning?

get    turn  
      take  
make    set

## Phrasal verbs with “out”

Fill each gap with one of the verbs:

I could not \_\_\_\_\_ out what she was saying  
I'd like to \_\_\_\_\_ you out for lunch  
I knocked on the door but he \_\_\_\_\_ out.  
Please don't argue. We mustn't \_\_\_\_\_ out.  
What time did you \_\_\_\_\_ out this morning?

fall    be  
      take  
make    set

## Phrasal verbs with “off”

Fill each gap with one of the verbs:

He wants to \_\_\_\_\_ off his meeting till this afternoon.  
He \_\_\_\_\_ off all the meringues.  
What time does the match \_\_\_\_\_ off ?  
Simon and Clare have \_\_\_\_\_ off their engagement.  
Our water supply has been \_\_\_\_\_ off  
If we \_\_\_\_\_ this off it will be a wonderful achievement !  
The company had to \_\_\_\_\_ off its debts.  
I will \_\_\_\_\_ off the map this evening on my way home.  
The thief \_\_\_\_\_ off with the family silver.  
The survivors \_\_\_\_\_ off fish and bird's eggs

call    turn  
write    pull  
      finish  
drop    put  
kick    live  
      make

## Phrasal verbs with “with”

Fill each gap with one of the verbs:

We need to \_\_\_\_\_ up with a solution now.  
Did they think they would \_\_\_\_\_ away with this?  
He knew how to \_\_\_\_\_ in with important people  
Sorry, I don't \_\_\_\_\_ with you.

agree  
come    get  
      keep

# Phrasal verbs

## Phrasal verbs : revision

How many gaps can you fill?

Get on with    think it through    come up with    fall out with  
sort it out    put off    stand up to    go without    turn up  
put down to    drop off    feel up to    get together  
be after    put up with    be off    drop in on    get in touch with

1. I am going to \_\_\_\_\_ a friend on the way home from work. (VISIT)
2. What time did she \_\_\_\_\_ ? Most people had gone home. (ARRIVE)
3. I don't \_\_\_\_\_ to going shopping today. (HAVE THE STRENGTH)
4. We must \_\_\_\_\_ one day soon ! (MEET)
5. I \_\_\_\_\_ his tiredness \_\_\_\_\_ problems at home. (EXPLAIN, ACCOUNT FOR)
6. He cannot \_\_\_\_\_ the noise that the animals make. (ENDURE)
7. We need to \_\_\_\_\_ a solution quickly. (FIND)
8. It is important that members of staff \_\_\_\_\_ each other. (LIKE)
9. If you \_\_\_\_\_ people who bully and intimidate, they soon stop. (RESIST)
10. He \_\_\_\_\_ the job of the chief executive ! (WANTS, DESIRES)
11. I don't think we should make a decision until we have all had the chance to \_\_\_\_\_ (CONSIDER)
12. What time \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ ? (LEAVING)
13. My husband is very argumentative. He \_\_\_\_\_ everyone.
14. Tomorrow's meeting has been \_\_\_\_\_. (POSTPONED)
15. We must \_\_\_\_\_ chocolate for a week. (NOT HAVE ANY)
16. I shall \_\_\_\_\_ him next week. (CONTACT)
17. No problem. We'll \_\_\_\_\_. (RESOLVE IT)
18. I'll \_\_\_\_\_ the books on my way past your house tonight. (DELIVER)

# Make and do

The verbs **make** and **do** are sometimes confusing, because in many other languages a single verb covers both (**faire, hacer**, etc). There is no comprehensive rule behind the use of the two English verbs, just one or two patterns: e.g. we use **do** for regular jobs that end **-ing** as in **we do the cleaning**.

"Oh,  
**do make** me a  
cup of tea!"

"Why can't  
you **make do** with a  
glass of water?"

Make or do? e.g. My children are unable to **MAKE / DO** a bed  
*Do you **make** a bed, or **do** a bed ? Answer : **MAKE***

Does your wife **MAKE / DO** all the shopping and the cooking ?  
When do the children **MAKE / DO** their exams?  
Who **MAKES / DOES** the annual tax returns?  
May I **MAKE / DO** a phonecall?  
I would like to **MAKE / DO** an appointment to see the dentist  
It's time to **MAKE / DO** a decision  
May I **MAKE / DO** a suggestion?  
**MAKE / DO** an excuse and leave early  
I shall **MAKE / DO** an enquiry  
Please **MAKE / DO** a list of all the things you need  
My advice is **MAKE / DO** nothing at all  
You can only **MAKE / DO** your best  
**MAKE / DO** me a favour: take the car to the garage  
In your case, we will **MAKE / DO** an exception  
Try not to **MAKE / DO** harm to yourself  
My boss always **MAKES / DOES** a point by tapping the table  
I need to **MAKE / DO** my hair before we leave  
**MAKE / DO** no more than 30 mph in built-up areas  
**MAKE / DO** an attempt to finish by 5pm  
**MAKE / DO** an effort to keep the bedroom tidy  
Have they **MADE / DONE** an offer to buy the house?  
You'll have to **MAKE / DO** something about it  
I want to **MAKE / DO** the washing-up  
I wish the warring factions would **MAKE / DO** peace  
Getting angry will **MAKE / DO** us no good  
Let's **MAKE / DO** business together  
Try not to **MAKE / DO** a mistake  
Let's **MAKE / DO** amends  
What a mess you have **MADE / DONE**  
Should we **MAKE / DO** war against those who attack us?  
Who is going to **MAKE / DO** the coffee?  
Let's **MAKE / DO** a film about our trip to America  
Please don't **MAKE / DO** a noise - we are recording  
I shall **MAKE / DO** an announcement shortly  
It's time to **MAKE / DO** some thinking about the future and **MAKE / DO** some plans

# Speak, say, tell and talk

We **speak** to a person about something, as in 'have a word with'. We **speak** quietly, softly, loudly, – i.e. the manner. We **speak** a language (French, Spanish, English, etc).

We **say** something (maybe to someone). Usually the thing said is more important than the person(s) we are saying it to: e.g. reporting some news.

We **tell** a person something, i.e. give them some information. With **tell**, the person told is more in mind than what is said. It also means 'instructed' as in 'she **told** him to clean the room'.

We **talk** to a person about something (a lot of overlap with **speak**). To go and **talk** to someone suggests a two-way conversation, a sharing of views; while **speak** implies less listening.

Choose the box for **say/saying/says**, the box for **tell/telling/tells**, the box for **speak/speaking/speaks**, and the box for **talk/talking/talks**; and fill the gaps.

E.g. if you choose **TALK** for the box below, each gap in that box is filled by either **talk**, **talks** or **talking**.

1. How do you \_\_\_\_\_ 'bread' in Russian?
2. I'm only going to \_\_\_\_\_ this once more.
3. It's no use \_\_\_\_\_ that it was an accident.
4. How do you \_\_\_\_\_ 'thank you' in Hungarian?
5. What are you \_\_\_\_\_? You only need one meal a day?
6. She cannot \_\_\_\_\_ words that begin with a 'p'.
7. How about we meet at the restaurant at, \_\_\_\_\_, 7.30pm?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ up! We can't hear you.
2. Do you \_\_\_\_\_ French? She \_\_\_\_\_ Italian.
3. I'm afraid the manager is on the other line. Who is \_\_\_\_\_?
4. \_\_\_\_\_ to your wife. Tell her you're sorry.
5. I'm going to have to \_\_\_\_\_ to him about his attitude.
6. I'm going to \_\_\_\_\_ about late Latin vowel shifts: I'm sure you are all familiar with my book on this fascinating topic?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ me what happened.
2. She will \_\_\_\_\_ you the answer.
3. I \_\_\_\_\_ you what, talking on a mobile while driving is as dangerous as drinking.
4. I'll \_\_\_\_\_ my boss immediately.
5. As soon as you hear something, \_\_\_\_\_ me.
6. I'll \_\_\_\_\_ you the story of the happy prince.
7. I'm going to sleep. Will you \_\_\_\_\_ me when we get there?
8. \_\_\_\_\_ me, am I responsible for feeding all the animals?

1. I hate it when my boss is patronising and \_\_\_\_\_ down to me.
2. I'm going to \_\_\_\_\_ to my colleague. He may have some good ideas.
3. Look who's \_\_\_\_\_! That's rich coming from you! \_\_\_\_\_ about hypocrisy!
4. \_\_\_\_\_ to your wife. Find out what she wants.
5. How much are we \_\_\_\_\_ here? £5000?
6. He never stops \_\_\_\_\_!
7. The trouble with you is you're all \_\_\_\_\_!
8. He gave a rather dull \_\_\_\_\_ on late Latin vowel shifts.

# Obligation words

## Must

**Must** is for orders, strong suggestions and important advice. It is the bossiest of all the obligation words.

She **must** revise if she wants to pass

You **must** all leave the building now!

**Must** has only a present tense and is used with the infinitive without **to**.

You **must** see the film, it's wonderful!

The negative (**must not**) is a prohibition (i.e. an order not to do something, and comes between **must** and the infinitive).

You **must not** feed the snakes.

I **must** take more exercise

## Should

**Should** has a present tense, and is used with the infinitive without **to**.

I **should** know better

**Should** has a past tense: **should have** + a past participle.

I **should have** arrived earlier

**Should** is a little softer than **must**. Use it for instructions and advice; it often has a moral dimension – like **ought**.

The negative is a prohibition, but is weaker than **must** (i.e. it's less serious if you don't take the advice).

You **shouldn't have** given me such an expensive present!

You **should** claim for your travel expenses.

You **shouldn't** whisper, it's rude.

## Have to

**Have to** is used in all tenses.

The negative is not a prohibition, but simply states there is no obligation.

**Have to** is used in very similar ways to **must** and **should**. It often expresses a sense of obligation coming from another party, not oneself.

We **have to** wear a hat on site at all times.

I **have to** be at the office every morning by eight o'clock.

You **have to** see this film, it's wonderful!

They **will have to** try harder next time.

I **don't have to** go to work today.

They **had to** stop because it was raining.

# Obligation words

## Ought to

**Ought to** has much overlap with **should** and to a lesser extent with **must** and **have to**. There is almost always a moral dimension – the right thing to do. We often say **ought** when we identify the thing we *should* do, but may fail to get round to actually doing.

**Ought to** is used in the present and past tenses.

**Ought** is followed by **to** except in the negative when **to** is optional: e.g. "I ought not (to) say."

The negative is prohibitive, as with **must** and **should**.

He **ought to** revise for his exam

You **ought to have** given the clothes to the charity shop

We **ought to** do more for the third world

I **ought not** stay too long.

I **ought to** visit my aunt more often

We **ought not** to preach what we cannot practise.

## Better

... **better** is advice for your own good (like all advice, though this usually has obvious and immediate benefits).

**You better ...** is a shortened form of **you'd better**, in turn a reduction of **you had better**. It has only a present tense, and is used with an infinitive without **to**.

The negative is advice not to do something, with **not** coming between **better** and the following verb.

You **better** take a coat

I **better** go and fetch the children

You **better not** leave the milk in the sun

You **better not** tell your wife yet

We **better not** wait any longer

You **better** hurry or you'll miss the train

## Need to

**Need to** is normally used to express something which must be done for something else to happen: typically, agendas and instructions.

It's used mainly in the present, sometimes in the future, and only occasionally in the past tense (no need to worry about that...). The idiom **no need to** is common (and here **need** is a noun). This is short for **there is no need to**.

The negative is not a prohibition but says that something is not necessary.

You **need to** take a passport and a map

If you want a ticket you'll **need to** contact the office before midday

**No need to** get up early tomorrow. It's Saturday!

# Obligation words

## have got to

**Has got to** is used very similarly to **must** and **have to**: often used for daily chores, jobs and duties. It is an alternative for **has to**. Stress **got** for emphasis and urgency.

She **has got to** be out of the flat by tomorrow.

He's **got to** work harder if he wants to finish the report by Monday

**Has got to** is used only in the present tense. **Has** is often abbreviated to **'s**; **have** to **'ve**.

The negative carries no obligation, just states that it is unnecessary.

She has not got to resit the exam. That's a relief.

## the inevitable must

**Must** appears earlier. There is also a use of **must** that carries a logical or inevitable sense.

Where is the diary?  
Simple, my dear Watson. You must be sitting on it.

"I must have left the keys in the car" (because I don't have them here).

"It must be raining because they have stopped playing tennis."

Good heavens ...  
how on earth did you know that, Holmes?

It is not used in the negative. For negative inevitability we say **cannot**:

My dear fellow, it was nowhere else.

"The keys **cannot** be in the car – because they are on the table."

## ROLE PLAYS

Advise or urge a friend to ...

- take a break while driving on a long journey
- eat less chocolate
- go to the gym every day
- not touch wet paint
- wear a suit for the party
- take more holidays
- not argue with the new receptionist
- learn five new words a day
- get out of the building - it's on fire
- never kiss a crocodile
- work harder
- pay the gas bill otherwise it will be cut off
- never walk beneath a ladder
- drive home before it gets dark
- not to discuss religion when out to dinner

# Obligation words



Which of his thoughts means ...

- (a) I realise I should stop (but I may not)
- (b) I'm really determined to stop
- (c) Other people don't like it

## ROLE PLAYS

Urge your colleagues to evacuate the offices because of a fire.

Explain to a colleague that it is not compulsory to work from 9 till 5 but they can work flexi-hours.

Explain to a colleague that there is no need for him to complete his report until after Christmas.

You are a dentist. Tell someone how to look after their teeth.

Explain to your teacher what your responsibilities and duties are at work

A colleague is speaking on his mobile phone while driving. Advise him against it.

A friend is leaving England tomorrow. The departure time from Bristol Airport is 2.30pm. As you are driving your friend to the airport explain what time you will be leaving.

Explain why ...

England must have scored, because there was a big cheer in the pub

It must be late because .....

It must be raining because .....

I must have left my briefcase in the office because .....

Who has taken your car? It cannot be Clare because .....

# To get

## to get excited

to get married  
to get drunk  
to get ready

**Get** + participle or adjective is the same as 'be' or 'become'.

Think of ways to describe these people, using **get**:

- e.g. My daughter always **gets sunburnt** when she sits in the sun
1. My wife/husband/closest friend gets .....
  2. My boss gets .....
  3. My colleagues get .....

## to get something done

to get the computer mended  
to get my hair cut  
to get the dinner ready

**Get** + noun + participle or adjective

Describe three things you plan to do in the next few months, using **get**:

e.g. I want to **get the bathroom painted**

1. I want to get .....
2. I want to get .....
3. I want to get .....

Use **get** with each of these participles

promoted

paid

sorted

checked

arrested

transferred

## to get to somewhere

How do I **get** to London?  
What time did he **get** home?  
It took two hours to **get** here  
How long will it take to **get** to the airport?

**Get** can mean 'make a journey' or 'arrive'.

Ask how long it takes to make these journeys and/or give the reply, using **get**:

e.g. It takes 3 hours to **get** from Paris to London

1. Bristol - London : 2hrs
2. Manchester - Birmingham : 90 minutes
3. Cheltenham - York : 4 hrs
4. Office - home : 45 minutes

## to get something to somewhere

I must **get** the parcel in the post  
She has to **get** the children to school.  
I will **get** the report to you soon

**Get** can mean to make something else (or someone) make a journey or arrive, i.e. usually that means taking them.

Create expressions saying how you have to take people to the places below, using **get**:

e.g. I have to **get** my mother-in-law to the airport  
Dentist    School    Airport    Doctor    Post Office

# To get

**to get** someone to do something

I'll **get** my mother to babysit for us  
**Get** Jim to mend the printer  
She will **get** the children to write letters to Granny

take the parcel for the vicar

You **get** the children and I'll **get** the shopping

I'll **get** the file from the office  
**Get** some champagne for tonight!  
I'll **get** the keys  
**Get** me a pen would you

What did you **get** for Christmas?

I hope to **get** a letter from my boss  
I hope to **get** some feedback  
She will **get** a receipt from the shop  
They **got** £1500 for the old car  
He **got** what he deserved

We'll **get** the bus

I'll **get** the train to London tonight  
He **got** a taxi to the station  
We're **getting** a plane to New York

Do you **get** it?

I don't **get** this. It's complicated  
Sorry, I don't **get** the joke at all

I'll **get** used to it

You'll **get used to** the cold weather  
I can't **get used to** the new schedule

To **get** a person to do something is to see that they do it, to supervise them.

Imagine you are to arrange for the people below to carry out the actions in bubbles. Explain what you will do in each case, using **get**:

Doctor   Vet   Milkman   Postman

deliver two extra pints

call to see my mother

examine the cat's paw

To **get** often means simply to fetch, to pick up, to go and buy in a shop.

Think of five things you'd really like to **get**:

e.g. I'd like to get a new car

Similar to the above, **get** can mean receive something (from someone).

What did you **get** for Christmas (or your birthday)?

**Get** can mean to take or catch a mode of transport.

Using **get**: describe

- a) how you get to work
- b) your last trip abroad
- c) how you travelled on your last holiday

To **get** something can mean to understand it.

Your teacher will tell you a joke. Say if you understand it, using **get**.

**Get used to** means grow accustomed to, be come familiar with.

Use **get used to** to describe how you feel about ...

Food in the UK   Driving on the left  
British weather

# To get in phrasal verbs

People who know how to use **get** in all its forms and usages, well most of them, can be considered very fluent speakers of English !

Traditionally, children at school in the UK are encouraged to avoid using **get** as it's not specific or clear. Better, teachers think, for a child to show that s/he can use alternatives and so demonstrate knowledge of vocabulary.

For you it's rather different. You can probably use many of the alternatives. Your challenge now is to use **get** !

See 'Phrasal verbs' for more on **to get**.

Rewrite each of the sentences below, using one of the expressions with **get** and avoid using the words in italics.

You may need to change other words too. Try to keep the same meaning as close to the original as possible.

1. Do your children *like* each other?
2. Where do we *leave* the bus?
3. I need time to *put* this relationship behind me.
4. Brilliant ! But I don't think you will *escape detection*.
5. What is your point? What are you *suggesting*?
6. We need to *leave* before midnight.
7. What time do you *rise* in the morning?
8. I can *survive* in Russian but not much more.
9. I don't know when we'll *start* decorating the flat.
10. Is it easy to *climb on* to an elephant?
11. How are you *doing* in your new job ?
12. Thanks for the call. I'll *phone* you back tomorrow.
13. You're going to the pub? How will you *avoid* work?
14. If we're to finish tonight we must *speed up* our work.
15. Oh come on ! *Be more organised* !
16. I tried to ring her but could not *make contact*.
17. I'm trying to *communicate* to you the problems we face.

**get on**  
**get at**  
**get up**  
**get across**  
**get out of**  
**get through**  
**get by**  
**get away**  
**get away with (it)**  
**get off**  
**get over**  
**getting on**  
**get it together**  
**get on with (it)**  
**get back to**  
**get round to (it)**

## Simple past of **get**

She **got** a Distinction in her exam  
She **got** me to ring the shop  
Last week she **got** ill, but **got**  
better soon afterwards  
Did you **get** a newspaper today?  
I didn't **get** anything at the shop

The simple past tense of **get** is **got**.  
For questions and negatives: **did + get**.

Rewrite each sentence and put **get** into the simple past

1. I get home at 8pm every evening  
(Answer: I **got** home ...)
2. How do you get from Bristol to Oxford?
3. What joke? I'm afraid I don't get it
4. I'll have to get a bus
5. They will not get rich
6. She gets away with it every time !
7. He gets on well with his boss
8. I will get you a new map
9. What time do you get up?
10. Will you get a new car?

## Past of **get** with **have**

She **has got** (gotten) more money  
than she can spend in a lifetime  
She **has** more money than she  
can spend in a lifetime  
He's **got** three more days on leave

**Have** with **got** is used to show possession  
(in America **gotten**). We could easily leave  
**got** out when we describe our possessions  
and just use the simple verb **have**

**Has** is often abbreviated to **'s**; and **have** to  
**'ve**

Rewrite each sentence and put **get** into the past tense with **have**:

1. What joke? I'm afraid I don't get it
2. They will get rich
3. She gets away with it every time !
4. He gets on well with his boss
5. I will get you a new map
6. Will you get a new car?

## The obligatory **has got to**

He **has got to** leave by 3pm  
We **have got to** get out of the  
building  
She's **got to** finish her report  
this afternoon.  
I've **got to** see my boss this  
morning

**Have** is used with **got** and then **to** to  
indicate a deadline or necessity or  
emergency (See have got to under  
Obligation).

Rewrite each sentence with **got**:

1. I must see you soon
2. We need to buy some bread
3. You should leave the building immediately
4. She must stay in bed for a while
5. They must produce letters of reference

## To get: more practice

In each sentence use the correct part of the verb **get** and avoid using the word in italics. You may have to change other words too.

1. Tomorrow I am *to be* married
2. Tonight I shall *make* myself drunk
3. She likes to *arrive* home before 7pm
4. I didn't *understand* what she was saying
5. I always *ask* my wife to cut my hair
6. She *became* ill after visiting the hospital
7. How much does he *earn* a month ?
8. He *becomes* angry very easily
9. They will *put* the contract in the post today
10. We must *arrange* for the car to be serviced
11. I'll *instruct* the bank to send a cheque
12. *Bring* the chairs in from the garden
13. When will we *reach* Paris?
14. I always *take* a taxi to the office
15. When will you *become* lucky ?
16. When does he *receive* his pay ?
17. The poor dog *was* run over
18. Once she *becomes* qualified she can relax a little
19. If you don't put a coat on, you'll *develop* a cold
20. She *became* better after a few days in bed
21. We are slowly *growing accustomed* to life in the UK !
22. Don't *become* excited !
23. She *becomes* cold very easily
24. *Fetch* me a glass of water, please
25. I don't *understand* what he means
26. I *received* a letter from the Inland Revenue today
27. How do you *go* to London from here?
28. We'll *arrange* for my mother to stay with the children
29. The children are *becoming familiar* with their new school
30. Can I *bring* you a drink ?
31. She will *take* the train to Birmingham
32. I will *arrange* for the car to be cleaned
33. This year we *received* a big bonus for improved performance
34. My father will have to *take* the children to school
35. When you *reach* Paddington *take* the underground to Victoria
36. It took four hours to *make* the journey home
37. If you have a problem *ask* my brother to help
38. She wants to *have* the house cleaned before the wedding

## To get: more practice

Rewrite each sentence leaving the meaning much the same, but don't use **get**:

1. Quick ! Someone, get the police !
2. Get my coat, please
3. Please get some cheese from the shop
4. How do you get from Bristol to Oxford ?
5. We got a postcard from my aunt in Spain
6. What joke? I'm afraid I don't get it
7. Where can I get advice ?
8. Where can I get a newspaper ?
9. The car's not working. I'll have to get a bus
10. Clare has got a grey cat
11. When did you get to work ?
12. Where can I get the car mended ?
13. We must get my mother to the dentist
14. Let me get you a glass of wine
15. I got an electric toothbrush for Christmas
16. Get the children to write to their teacher
17. How much did he get for his car ?
18. We must get home before midnight
19. Remember to get a receipt at the shop
20. How will you get the dog to the vet ?

Retell the story below - without using **get** or **got**

Jo was getting tired. The children were getting noisier and noisier, and Ken her husband would not get home till late that evening. He often seemed to have a late appointment when there were things to be done at home.

"I don't know why I let him get away with it. Still it's no use getting angry with him," she thought. "Perhaps he's getting off with his secretary." Jo smiled. Daphne, her husband's secretary, was older than Jo's mother and three times her size.

A crash upstairs pulled her out of such thoughts. Again a thump, followed by a smash of something ceramic. "Got you!" The shrill voice of her elder son crashed into the street from the window upstairs.

"Now this is getting beyond a joke." She got up and walked to the dining-room to get something that she was sure would get the boys to behave – tomorrow's birthday present.

# Idioms: time, clothes and parts of the body

With your teacher think up expressions for these idioms. Highlight ones you would like to use:

## PARTS OF THE BODY

a head for figures  
keep your hair on  
off the top of my head  
heads will roll  
get heads together  
head and shoulders above the competition  
browbeaten  
I'm all ears  
keep your ears to the ground  
raise eyebrows  
I think we see eye-to-eye  
keep your eyes peeled  
keep your eye on the ball  
right under her nose  
follow your nose  
in your face  
I can't face it  
straight face  
what a cheek  
take it on the chin  
chin up  
neck and neck  
stick my neck out  
lend a hand  
hands on  
underhand  
hold my hand up  
on the other hand  
the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing  
point the finger  
pull your finger out  
get our fingers burnt  
stick out like a sore thumb  
play your cards close to your chest  
get it off your chest  
her heart is not in it  
backs to the wall  
a gut feeling  
put bums on seats  
pull your leg  
leg it  
knees up  
put his foot in it  
put my foot down  
foot loose and fancy free  
toe the line

down at heel  
foot the bill  
jump in with both feet  
land on your feet  
skin deep

## TIME

around the clock  
night shift  
9-5  
24-hour service  
daylight robbery  
seven days a week  
24/7  
here till midnight  
on time  
in time  
only a matter of time  
full time  
part time  
time off

## CLOTHES

pull your socks up  
roll up our sleeves  
shirt off his back  
fancy dress  
keep your shirt on  
put the boot in  
white-collar  
blue-collar  
wearing his salesman's hat  
she wears the trousers  
too big for his boots  
evening dress  
a stuffed shirt  
take my hat off to  
hang on to your hats  
step into his shoes  
work your socks off  
If I were in your shoes  
under his belt  
below the belt

# Idioms: figures of speech

Choose the expressions below to fill the gaps

a flop      blew it      put the cat amongst the pigeons  
just the ticket      put two fingers up      feeling under the weather  
throw in the towel      put two and two together      make ends meet  
put my finger on it      a dark horse      music to my ears  
the icing on the cake      on the same wavelength

1. I do not know our neighbour well. He keeps himself to himself. He's a bit of .....
2. I cannot explain exactly why she behaves like this. There's no obvious reason. I'm afraid I can't .....
3. Excellent. That is a good idea. That will be .....
4. They have little money and so find it difficult to .....
5. I like the sound of that ! It's .....
6. What a pity. He ..... again. Driving tests are never easy these days.
7. He just left without a word. He couldn't care about the company. I'm afraid he just ..... and walked out.
8. Do you understand her? I don't know where she's coming from. She's not ..... as the others in her team.
9. Perfect ! We finish the day with a film. That will be .....
10. I'm giving in. I'm going to .....
11. The new business venture in America did not work out. I'm afraid it was .....
12. I'd like to be a fly on the wall when she hears what Denis said about her project! That'll .....
13. I'm not coming into work today. I'm .....
14. You don't need to be a rocket scientist to work out where she has gone. .... – it's obvious, isn't it?

# Idioms: figures of speech

Choose the expressions replace the words in italics

banging on    put my foot in it    add up    on second thoughts  
off his/her head    below the belt    on the ball  
got the wrong end of the stick    on the make    point the finger at  
behind his/her back    not really my cup of tea  
ride roughshod over    have his/her own way    lend a hand

1. I think I'll give the cricket match a miss. It's *not something I like*.
2. I probably said the wrong thing. She seemed quite upset. I think I *made an error*.
3. I don't trust Tom very much. He's always *looking for personal gain*.
4. I don't know what he's on about. He's *crazy*.
5. Excuse me, can you *help me for a moment* ?
6. That was a bit mean of him to say that. It was *not very fair*.
7. If he had been offered a higher salary, why did he leave the company? It doesn't *make sense*.
8. She's *very efficient*, no question. I like her. Very organised and attentive to detail.
9. He's a bully. He'll *dominate* everyone in the meeting. He'll *choose the solution*, you wait.
10. He was offended because she went to see the manager *without telling him*.
11. He's always *talking endlessly* about his new car.
12. I'm not so sure. *After considering it*, I think we should go and see a film instead.
13. He reacted strangely, it's true. I think he *completely misunderstood the point*.
14. I'm not here to *accuse* anyone.

# Social English: meeting people

Pleased to meet you  
How do you do  
Nice to meet you  
Good to meet you

**How do you do** is not a question that needs an answer. People reply the same ('How do you do') or say any of the other expressions in the list.

**Nice to meet you** and **Good to meet you** can also be said at the *end* of a first meeting, along with 'goodbye'.

British people shake hands when they meet for the first time, though generally don't at subsequent meetings.



**Ladies and gentlemen, may I introduce to you someone who has done a lot for this company ...**

Please let me introduce myself  
I would like to introduce you to ...  
Let me introduce you to ...  
This is ...



## ROLE PLAY

Imagine you have never met your teacher before. Introduce yourself.

Now your teacher will introduce you to an imaginary group of distinguished listeners ...

And your turn: introduce your teacher to the same audience.

# Social English: catching up

When you meet someone you know, **Good morning** or **Morning** is fine up until midday. **Afternoon** or **Good afternoon** is standard at work after midday, though a bit too formal for your wife or husband. **Hi, hello** and the others are warm and friendly. **Hello** is standard on the telephone.

A few people will shake hands when they meet friends and colleagues, but most don't. The only certain time we shake hands is when we meet for the first time.

When they meet a colleague, people in Britain like to talk about the weather. The weather in Britain is unpredictable and can change in seconds. That's why it's a talking point. The key is to express a mild grumble, however hot or cold or wet or windy it might be, and to avoid precise statements.

We like to 'catch up with' friends and colleagues, to find out how they are and what they are doing (or 'what they are up to'). If they reply **It could be worse** or **Not so bad**, this is not as negative as it seems.

When we 'catch up' we make 'small talk', which is light conversation about the weather, something in the news, what you did last night and similar. Small talk generally avoids politics, religion and other opinionated subjects which may expose different views and create an awkward atmosphere.

Good morning  
Morning  
Hello  
Hi  
Hello (especially on the telephone)

**Hi!**

Reply with something **slightly different** from what the other person says: e.g. *Good morning ... Morning, Hello ... Hi*, etc. It sounds more friendly. People shake hands when they meet for the first time, but generally not again.

Exchange greetings with your teacher as if the time were ...

9am  
3pm  
8pm

**How's it going?**

Good to see you  
How you doing?  
How's it going?  
How are things?  
Not too bad  
Yes, not so bad  
Yes, good thanks  
What are you up to these days?



**A bit chilly today**

Freezing, isn't it!  
What a lovely day – and we're indoors!  
Raining again. Will it ever stop?  
A bit windy today!

## ROLE PLAY

Practise making small talk with your teacher about:

- 1) the current weather
- 2) a recent sports game
- 3) a television programme you have both seen
- 4) your favourite music
- 5) what you did last weekend

# At home

In which of these places below do you hear people say these things?

?

BANK

HEALTH CENTRE

POLICE STATION

RESTAURANT

POST OFFICE

DENTIST

CHURCH

RAILWAY STATION

I want to register my family with a doctor

When is the next train to Bristol due?

Five stamps for Europe, please

Please confirm the address where the statements are sent

I want to report a theft

When did you open this account?

We're all gathered here today to celebrate this wedding ...

I will need to ask you questions about your account for security purposes

What is the overdraft limit?

Who else is a signatory on this account?

I'll have the same as her, please

I want to renew my car tax, please

I want to have my daughter christened

Open wide

A return to Gloucester please

Our dog has gone missing

What is the sort-code?

# At home: services and utilities

Who are you telephoning ?

a plumber

an electrician

a heating-engineer

a builder

BT (British Telecom)

The telephone line is not working

I'd like to book the annual service for my boiler

I need two lights fitted

Please provide a quote for rebuilding the garden wall

When can you come to mend the leaking bath?



Printed directories like The Yellow Pages or Thompsons will list details of services such as a **plumber** (pipework, leaks) or an **electrician** (lighting and electrical) or a general **builder**. If you know a colleague who has used one of these services ask for contact details. This kind of referral is often the best source. We call it 'word-of-mouth'.

On the internet you will find yell.com (the web version of Yellow Pages) and all the search engines such as www.google.co.uk.

**Electricity** will be already set up. So will **gas** if the property has it. All you need to do is give the company your details and a reading of the two meters.

You can change electricity or gas supplier if you wish. A company may give discounts if you buy both your gas and your electricity from the one company, and also if you arrange to pay by direct debit.

**Water** is provided by the local water company. The charges are payable half-yearly.

## Council Tax

This is the local tax payable to the local council. The amount will depend on the particular council's levy, and the kind of property you live in.

## The telephone (landline)

British Telecom (known as **BT**) or Telewest provide the telephone lines. You can choose another company for the actual calls you make and you would then pay a rental to BT for the line, and a monthly bill for the calls to the other company. Alternatively you can put all the charge through BT, but make sure they are giving you a competitive price with all the due discounts. Telewest is an alternative to BT, a company that offers a package of cable TV, internet and telephone. Telewest is not available in all parts of the country.

Dial **150** to speak to a BT assistant.

## Emails and Internet

Broadband is now available in most parts of the country.

## Home Insurance

You will need **household contents insurance** to cover your possessions against theft or damage. If you own the property you will need **buildings insurance** too. Insurance companies are listed in the YELLOW PAGES under 'Insurance - Home & Buildings'.

# At home: on the phone

## OPINION

“ In Britain as in the rest of the world we buy and sell lots of things over the telephone or internet. This is much more convenient than driving to a local shopping centre, finding somewhere to park, searching through the shops, then queuing to be served.

Banks, insurance companies, telephone companies and other services all run their businesses over the phone or internet. With internet banking facilities you can transfer money quickly and get up-to-date information about your account balances.

But with the pluses come some minuses. If you need personal attention to resolve a problem, this may prove more difficult. A colleague once found that he was being overcharged by a mobile phone company and despite all his efforts never identified the address of the head office he should contact. He was constantly frustrated by the faceless and changing agents in Customer Services, as he was bounced from one agent to another. To each one he had to explain who he was and what he needed. They were nice and polite but failed to help. He said it would be easier to locate a terrorist cell in deepest Asia than get a satisfactory response from this mobile telephone provider.

Business at-a-distance has many advantages, but it can be a frustrating experience as we sit by the phone waiting for help or pressing all the numbers that seem to lead nowhere. It is no wonder that some people are happier facing the queues and crowded shopping centres.

” What are your experiences of shopping by telephone and the internet? Do you find the conveniences outweigh the disadvantages?

Typical over-the-telephone businesses :

**Telephone companies** e.g. BT (British Telecom), Telewest and all mobile phone providers

**Banks** Have your account details ready when you contact them

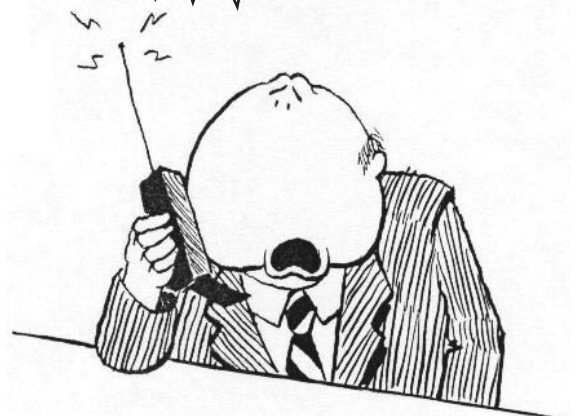
**Insurance companies**

**Gas and Electricity companies**

**Service contracts** e.g. washing-machines

“To help us deal with your enquiry more efficiently please select from one of the following options:

Press ONE for sales and product information. Press TWO to discuss an invoice. Press THREE for technical support. Press FOUR for Customer Services. Press FIVE to hear these options again or hold to speak to an operator.”



Which number should he choose

- 1) to question the charges?
- 2) to complain about the service?
- 3) to ask about a new product?
- 4) if he's a bit deaf?
- 5) to get help with the installation?
- 6) to speak to his wife who works there?

# At home: shopping around

## Discussing quality and value

This is a brand name  
Top of the range  
Value for money  
Cheap and cheerful  
Poor quality  
A waste of money  
Overpriced  
Cost-effective  
Past its sell-by date  
You get what you pay for  
A good investment  
A good deal  
Out of my price range

## Asking for a price

Which brings me to cost  
How much does it cost?  
Can you give a quote for ...  
Do you have a price for ...  
How much will it cost if ...

## Getting the best deal

Is there a discount if I pay cash?  
If I buy two is there a reduction?  
Is that your best price?  
Will you negotiate on cost?  
Does it include delivery?  
Does the price include VAT?  
When can you deliver?  
Pay up front  
How long is the guarantee?  
The bottom line is...  
This is my final offer



Do you do the same model in blue?

If you need some work done in the house, for example a plumber or decorator, always ask for a quote for the job. Most tradesmen should be able to give you a fixed price. Watch out for extras – ask about the cost of materials, and whether their price includes VAT (an extra 17½%).

### TIP

Get the name of the agent you speak to, where they are located, and any reference number for your call.

Similarly, for a car service, for insurance, for any kind of service or product, you

should ask the price before you say yes. Be wary of paying any new tradesmen (builders, plumbers, etc) any money up front, i.e. in advance. If you know and trust them and they need money to buy materials then that is different.

Some big stores offer lots of 'Buy now, pay later' deals, where you pay in monthly instalments. If you are prepared to pay for all of it immediately, ask them to take a little off the price.

The British are not the most natural negotiators, but don't be afraid to ask for discounts and reductions. Nor be offended if they say no.

## ROLE PLAY

You are shopping for a mobile phone. The sales assistant (your teacher) has two to show you: one is simple dated model with no extras; the other is a state-of-the-art new phone with every conceivable extra (and much more costly).

# At home: the small print

## The small print

'Small print' is the terms and conditions of the deal, what you see, literally, in small print on the back of tickets, bills and other records of purchase.

Discuss the meaning of each of these terms with your teacher

Contract  
Terms and Conditions  
Small print  
Notice in writing  
Warranty  
Trial period  
Supplier  
Purchase order  
Fixed and firm price  
Compensation  
Confidentiality  
Unwarranted disclosure  
Copyright protected  
Negligence  
In breach of contract  
Statutory rights  
In writing  
Probationary period  
No obligation  
Verbal agreement

This Agreement is the entire agreement, and supersedes all prior or contemporaneous oral or written agreements and understandings, between the parties regarding the subject matter hereof. The Agreement may be changed only in writing signed by both parties.

This Agreement shall be construed under and governed by the laws of England and Wales and the parties shall submit to the jurisdiction of the English courts

What information do you take from this bit of a contract?

Please  
can you put that  
in writing



### ROLE PLAYS

- 1) You are on the phone to a computer saleroom (your teacher). You want to buy a laptop. There is one under special offer which seems to meet your needs. Discuss the model, the price, the guarantee, delivery etc. You buy it with your credit card.
- 2) You take it home and it does not work. So now you return it and ask for it to be mended or your money returned.
- 3) Telephone your landlord (i.e. your teacher) to explain that the bath in the flat upstairs has leaked and that this has damaged your television set.
- 4) Tell the same landlord that you intend to leave the flat at the end of the week. The landlord explains to you the formalities of notice, etc.

# At home: sorting problems

**I need this to be sorted out**



Can I ask you to  
I'd be grateful if you would  
I must ask you to  
I need you to sort this out  
I don't want to make an issue of this, but ...  
It's high time something was done about this  
Look, this should have been done some time ago ...  
This is still not sorted. Can you do something about it  
When is this going to be done?  
I really need this taken care of  
This is urgent. I have asked many times.  
Oh this is really disappointing.

## ROLE PLAYS

Ring your bank (your teacher) to ask for a new pay-in book.  
For security purposes, you will be asked your name, account number, sortcode, date of birth, how long you have had the account, and the postcode of the address to which the statements are sent.

Now ring the bank again (same teacher but different bank employee).  
The pay-in book has not arrived. You go through the same process, this time also checking and spelling your address.

Card type (Visa, Maestro...)

Credit card number

Name of the cardholder

Sort code

Valid from date

Expiry date

Perfect Bankers

Misacard

1234 5678 9123 4567

Mr A F Chance

20-30-96  
CODE NUMBER

10/07  
VALID FROM

09/09  
EXPIRES END

## ROLE PLAYS

Your teacher is now a customer services representative for a mail-order service for beds. You are on the phone to him/her.

You purchase the 'Kings Double Bed', which is priced at £1099 but under sale offer at £999. You pay by credit card (details above). Ask when it will be delivered so that you can arrange to be at home.

You stay at home on the day of delivery, but the bed does not arrive. Ring your teacher and ask where the bed is. Arrange a new day for delivery.

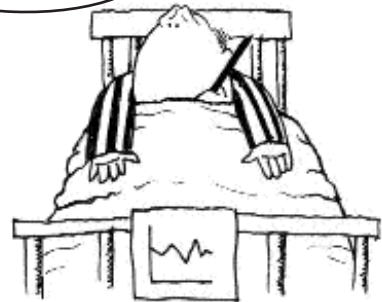
The bed arrives, with the invoice/receipt. The company has charged £1099, not £999. Once again ring the 'customer services' operator.

# At home: health

In the UK you register as a patient at a local **health centre** as soon as you arrive in the area. You will have a designated doctor but sometimes you may be seen by one of his or her colleagues – depending upon availability. You can always express a preference to see a particular doctor. It is advisable to telephone and book an appointment, although some health centres operate a 'first-come-first serve' policy, at least on certain of the days of the week.

**Dentists** are separate and have their own practices.

How are you feeling?



Put these in order of how well they feel, the healthiest first:

- He is feeling much better now
- He's not feeling too bad
- He's feeling a bit under the weather
- He's feeling very poorly
- He's feeling as fit as a fiddle

Where are these parts of the body?

ear, shoulder, knee,  
neck, ankle, elbow

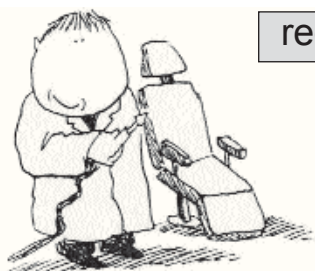
Pair each symptom with the expressions

- headache
- nausea
- stomach ache
- toothache
- sprained ankle
- diarrhoea
- sore throat
- cough
- 'flu
- rash
- exhaustion
- broken leg



- I have a runny tummy
- I have a cough
- I am feeling exhausted and run down
- I have 'flu symptoms
- My stomach hurts
- I feel sick
- My skin is covered with a rash
- My leg is in plaster
- I have to limp all the time
- My tooth is very painful
- I have a headache

Where will you find these people ?



regularly visiting a patient at home

hospital ward

health centre

dental surgery

chemist

operating theatre

A&E (Accident & Emergency)

outpatients

- doctor
- sister
- surgeon
- physiotherapist
- paramedic
- dentist
- pharmacist
- district nurse

# At home: insuring your car

Discuss with your teacher what you can tell about the car listed in the insurance document below.

Describe your own car. How is it insured?

**Comprehensive cover** - this means fully covered, your car and any other vehicle involved.

**Third party - minimum coverage**, only covers the other vehicle involved.

**Third party, fire and theft** - minimum coverage plus cover for your car if it is stolen and damaged.

**Policyholder** - the person whose name it is in.

**Endorsements** - you have been penalised by the police or the courts for a driving offence.

**No Claim Discount** - reduction of the premium if you have not made an insurance claim over the previous x number of years.

## Sample Car Insurance Document

Period of cover required	From 10:30 on 28 September 2005 To 12:00 on 21 August 2006
--------------------------	--

### Your personal details...

Name:	Mrs Rebecca Smith
Address:	The Farm House, Oak Tree Road, Little Hampton, Surrey, SY2 5EE

### Vehicle details...

Make and model	2000 FORD MONDEO
Cubic capacity (engine size)	1600cc
Transmission	Automatic <b>Manual transmission</b>
Fuel system	Petrol/Diesel
Body type	<b>3 door hatchback</b> /5 door estate
Registration number	BW02 UEG
Estimated annual mileage	10,000
Registered keeper	Insured
Owner of vehicle	Policyholder
Number of cars in family	2
Kept overnight	<b>Garaged</b> Roadside/Off street parking
Vehicle kept at postcode	SY2 5EE
Cover applicable (see policy for full definition)	
Cover (type of insurance)	<b>Comprehensive</b> Third party/Third party, fire and theft
Driving option	The insured and named drivers
Additional covers applicable	Legal Services, Personal Accident, Physio Fast
Extra personal accident cover	Your cover has been extended to provide an additional £20,000 payable for accidental death or injury to the policyholder in the event of a motor accident. This additional cover will cease when the policyholder reaches 75 years of age.
Courtesy Car	You have (not) chosen to have a Courtesy Car.
Total excess including voluntary	£120 (Additional <del>at you</del> young driver excesses may apply) Windscreen excess of £60.
Use	Social domestic pleasure and commuting (to and from a place of paid employment)

# At home: television

## News

Both BBC and ITV show their main evening news programme at 10pm. BBC 2's **Newsnight** runs a little later. BBC 24 is non-stop news, SKY has a similar programme.

## Soaps

Daily half-an-hour rituals for addicts. These are serials, ongoing stories, which last, well, forever. **Neighbours** (Australian) is on BBC One, which also gives us **Eastenders** (with London accents). **Coronation Street** (Manchester accent) and **Emmerdale** (Yorkshire) are both on ITV. The best soap on the box is still **The Simpsons**, a serialised cartoon about a stereotypical hard-up mid-American household, which happens to be the only family on TV who have a deep family bond, go to church, and visit wildlife parks ... So where's the fun here? See Channel 4, 6pm.

## Sport

Most of the best bits on TV have been taken over by Sky (for which you pay – [www.sky.com](http://www.sky.com)). Live rugby, football, tennis and other top sports are all available here. There is still some sport left with the BBC, darts, snooker, athletics – and occasional rugby and football matches. On Saturday and Sunday evenings BBC One's **Match of the Day** shows the weekend's football.

## Sitcoms

A word formed from situation-comedy, a comedy set in a typical situation: family life, at the office, in a school, etc. **The Vicar of Dibley**, **Only Fools and Horses**, **The Office**, **Extras**, **Fawlty Towers**, **Yes (Prime) Minister** and **Dad's Army** are all worth a look. **The Simpsons** is close to being the best sitcom as well as the best soap. And then there is **Mr Bean**, whose actor takes on a more challenging character (and funnier) as **Blackadder**. Lots of fun in the word-play there. **Sex and the City**, **Desperate Housewives**, **Malcolm in the Middle** (this one excellent family viewing) all offer American English.

## Serial thrillers and detective stories

e.g. **Foyle's War**, **Midsomer Murders**, **Frost**. Often well made with crisp plots and good dialogues. More contemporary are thrillers like **Spooks**, but can be cliché-ridden with far-fetched or politically-contorted plots. To hear American equivalents see the **CSI** programmes.

## Documentaries

Political and other current topical issues are examined, e.g. in **Panorama** (BBC One), **Despatches** (Channel 4). Their incisive factual reporting is worth a listen, but bear in mind that the makers put most of their effort into sexing up the story to stop you switching to another channel.

## History and travel

Personal odysseys by TV personalities take us to the far side of the world, or they revisit our historical past and show interesting shots of architectural remains.

# At home: television (contd)

## Wildlife ('Natural History') programmes

Possibly what television does best. Some wonderful photography on land and under the sea, and it's all food, murder and sex – in the animal kingdom.

## Children's TV

Daytime viewing has shows for pre-school children. The late afternoon has programmes for children coming home from school. Those programmes which are thought suitable for adults only are supposed to start after 9 o'clock.

## Political and topical satire

**Bremner, Bird and Fortune** is about all there is to see in the way of comic satire on British TV. Some of the other satirical shows can be all bite and no smile, more a political whinge than satire. Rory Bremner and his team are funny with it. Chris Morris (e.g. **The Day Today**, **Brass Eye**) always provokes a reaction. **Have I got news for you** is entertaining but not really satire at all – more like a cross between a quiz and a comedian's stand-up show. **Yes (Prime) Minister**, filmed during the Thatcher years, is clever and does wonderful things with the language. The bumbling politician starts as a mere cabinet minister but rises to become Prime Minister. You'll find this on DVD, and from time to time repeated on TV.

## Quiz shows

A range of shows to test your wits. **Who wants to be a millionaire?** is the one to win if you want to be rich. **Mastermind** is more demanding, and **University Challenge** pushes the questions through at a rapid pace.

## Chat shows

There are a few of these scattered over the different channels and are worth trying if only for the English they speak. **Jonathan Ross** on Friday nights has guests with the highest celebrity status – in other words people from outside the UK may have heard of them.

## Makeover shows

There are lots of 'makeover' shows, where gardens and houses are redesigned to the delight of the unsuspecting owner, who enjoys a tearful moment at the show's climax. There are some DIY tips and useful descriptions of things, but the wallpaper in your own home can be more exciting. After all your wallpaper is there, in the flesh.

## Reality TV

Not as interesting as going to a zoo, but easier to get to see. TV producers realised that if they put people in a room together, there would be fall-out which they could catch on camera. Very cheap television, cheap to make and not worth a lot when it's made. **Big Brother** on Channel 4 is a good one to avoid. Are we really so dull that we want to watch even duller people clamber all over each other just to get on television? Yes, according to the rest of my family. Not a bad idea to take a look at one of these shows, though, if only to see if you can understand what they're saying. I can't.

## At home: radio

**BBC Five Live** [909 & 693 AM] is an ongoing chatshow. No music, just conversations with politicians, celebrities and others in the news. Regular news bulletins and lots of phone-calls from members of the public. Good listening practice, for sure. Sport is covered in depth, some of it good, some of it, well ... listen to the phone-in programmes to hear lively colloquial English and to hear just how obsessed we are with trivia (e.g. football). And plenty of traffic information should you be on the road.

**BBC Radio Four** [92-95 FM & 198 LW] Radio plays, sketch shows, readings, documentary-style programmes, investigative stories, longer news programmes. More detailed than Five Live.

**BBC Radio Three** [90-93 FM]. Primarily classical music, with jazz, and now some drama.

**BBC Radio Two** [88-91 FM]. A mixture of chat and music, aimed at the thirty-somethings and older.

**BBC Radio One** [97-99 FM]. For anyone under 20. Current pop and hip cool teenage stuff.

**Classic FM.** Independent radio's answer to Radio Three. Mozart with commercial breaks.

**BBC local radio** covers events and issues (and traffic news) in your area.

A number of local commercial stations exist too.


What radio stations do you listen to ?

What TV programmes do you like to watch ?



# At home: more practice

Who has the lady called from the list on the right?



My husband needs a filling repaired.

I need to make an appointment for my daughter. She's off school at the moment.

My daughter is not well today. Please can you pass this on to the swimming coach.

I'd like to have the tyres changed.

The kitchen is completely flooded.

My sort-code is 90-36-27

HEALTH CENTRE

SCHOOL

BANK

CAR SERVICE CENTRE

INSURERS

DENTIST

?

Which number do you press if you want to ...

- ask when the telephone you have bought will be delivered
- relocate to London
- query their charges
- complain about the amount of tax you are paying
- get help installing a product you have bought
- buy a broadband service
- close an account

If you want a new product or service, **PRESS ONE** to speak to one of our experienced sales advisors.

To ask about an existing order or service, **PRESS TWO.**

If you have moved house, **PRESS THREE.**

If you need help with a technical problem, **PRESS FOUR.**

If you want to discuss a bill, **PRESS FIVE.**

If you want to speak to the Prime Minister, **PRESS SIX.**

# Review your skills

## Can you ...

- Discuss business issues with colleagues
- Manage a discussion within a group
- Give a presentation
- Negotiate a settlement or price
- Deal with the bank over the phone
- Contact services (e.g. gas, electricity) by phone
- Deal with schedules: time and dates
- Make a credit card purchase
- Take a faulty purchase back to the vendor
- Make a complaint
- Handle a complaint
- Spell out information over the phone
- Change an appointment
- Ask for directions
- Give directions
- Get details from a new supplier or service
- Describe a person
- Describe a place
- Describe an experience
- Visit a doctor / hospital / dentist



# Origins of English

## Early English

Most of our much-used shorter words can be traced back to when English was first heard in Britain. Many of these words have 'cousins' in modern German, for it was from the continent that the English language first came, spoken by the immigrant Anglo-Saxons.

English	German
house	Haus
book	Buch
fresh	frisch
hand	Hund
night	Nacht
swim	schwimmen
light	Licht
twelve	zwölf
shoe	Schuh

Small 'function' words like **and**, **the** and **with** are among these Anglo-Saxon survivors, and appear in almost every expression.

So too are suffixes such as **-wards** (homewards, towards), and **-wise** (otherwise)

Anglo-Saxon nouns tend to describe things which you can picture quite easily, solid objects with concrete characteristics, like **boat**, **road**, **food**, **house**, **milk**.

Verbs similarly deal with straightforward activities, like **eat**, **spend**, **help**, **ride**, **kiss**, **swim**.

Adjectives are likewise 'down-to-earth', e.g. **long**, **short**, **good**, **wise**, **sweet**, **new**, **ill**.

These ancient words, despite their age, remain at the heart of English today.

## The Vikings

The Vikings attacked Britain in the eighth and ninth centuries, and some of their inevitably violent words ended up in our language: **die**, **drown**, **gasp**, **hit**, **knife**, **ransack**, **rotten**, **rugged**, **scare**, **scream** and **ugly**. But there were more peaceable ones too – **law** among them: **birth**, **call**, **egg**, **fellow**, **get**, **give**, **glitter**, **guess**, **happy**, **husband**, **ill**, **law**, **leg**, **lift**, **link**, **loan**, **low**, **meek**, **odd**, **root**, **scrap**, **skin**, **thrive**, **tight**, **want**, **weak** and **window**. Some Viking words survived alongside the English cousins, gradually developing different meanings.

Anglo-Saxon	Viking
shirt	skirt
shatter	scatter
shell	skull

## French

The Norman conquest of 1066 started a flow of French words into English which continued for many centuries.

pre-1066	French arrivals
bliss	pleasure
board	table
happiness	joy
shire	county
blossom	flower
wealth	riches

French remained the language of government for over three hundred years. Words to do with power and authority are mostly from French:

army, bondage, command, court, crown, majesty, master, mayor, mistress, obey, parliament, peasant, prison, rent, servant, slave, subject, tax

## Latin & Greek

From the 1500s on, a resurgent interest in the classical languages, Latin and Greek, caused a number of new creations in English.

### Latin

agile, computer, interpret, judicious, juvenile, optimum, ridiculous, splendid, virus

### Greek

agony, ballistic, biology, cinema, democracy, idea, idiot, philosophy, sympathy, theatre

Some classical words arrived as French words (French is an evolved form of Latin). When scholars started to coin new words based on the classical languages, some Latin words developed two forms in English, which in time have developed different nuances.

Direct from Latin	Latin via French
compute	count
discus	dish
secure	sure
radius	ray
fantasy	fancy
fragile	frail
capture	catch

## Variety ...

At the roots of English you will find a Germanic language that mixed with French and brushed up with Latin. Along the way it absorbed words of the Vikings, of more French, of Spanish and Italian, of Dutch and others before it spread around the globe via British traderoutes where in turn it reaped a rich intake of words from other languages and cultures – and continues to do so, though the traderoutes are now principally American.

# Origins of English

The best use of English takes advantage of all its sources of vocabulary, from the easy, supple Anglo-Saxon words to the more sophisticated or technical ones from the classical languages. We say 'sophisticated' – be cautious of overuse. The age-old precept is never use a longer word if a shorter word will do. This is not easy in a specialist presentation, with its business-specific language. But the point remains. If you have technical or business-specific words on the slide, use different words in the talk. The mix is stimulating, makes sure they've got the point, and puts you more in control. Think of another way of saying the same thing. Use different words from the text on display.

Ex-Latin words come very readily to French and Spanish people, for the good reason that Latin is their parent language. English has Latin words too, less directly. They were fashioned or imported to create a more formal idiom or to supply a name for a new concept or definition. Some of these ex-Latin words filled gaps in the existing idiom and settled quickly and now we couldn't manage without them (*computer, virus, deviate, certify*). They can be clinical and precise; but should not be overused. It's the older non-Latin words, by and large, that keeps an English audience from nodding off.

Ex-Latin words are used to in all sorts of affected ways. People who call their house a 'residence' or a 'domicile' are putting on more airs than those who use the more native 'household' or 'home'. Calling someone 'friendly' suggests you like them more than if they were 'amicable'. Some people 'take the blame' for something they've done wrong; others might say they are 'culpable': which of the two appears more sincere? Sincerity comes over far better with the older native words. The thing is to find the right balance. A discussion of financial forecasts or of micro-chip technology will always be framed in its own lexis. But a different way of saying the same thing will feel fresh and have greater impact.

Match the English words derived from Latin with their more native English equivalents.

vicinity	hinder
deteriorate	shorten
defective	get worse
conceal	neighbourhood
impede	make the most of
irate	end
accumulate	start
comprehend	hide
initiate	angry
abbreviate	gather
cooperate	faulty
speculate	understand
optimize	lend a hand
terminate	guess

# Origins of English

In its day the young language was vibrant and supple, quick to absorb foreign words, clever at fashioning new ones and equipped with a subtle inflexional system that has since been almost entirely lost. An inflexion is the ending of a word, and what it adds to the meaning. An 's' added to a noun, for example, usually means a plural; '-ed' at the end of a verb tells you it's describing something in the past (jumped instead of jump).

Anglo-Saxons fashioned a number of words by joining two existing words

The habit of creating verbs from nouns (he **binned** his computer) is more than a thousand years old. Anglo-Saxons once made **tell** from **tale**, and **sell** from **sale**. Like **to bin** from **a bin**, we have **to bill** from **a bill** (i.e. invoice), **to market** from **a market**, and **to shop** from **a shop**.

Nouns are also made from verbs.

Identify the nouns below that elsewhere could be a verb:

a pleasant walk  
a nice try  
an invite to the party  
a long run  
the hard sell  
a good buy  
a tough ask

When French and English were both spoken in Britain after the Norman conquest, a number of phrases came into use which were two words linked by 'and'. The double-expression was to make sure that both French and English listeners understood the meaning, particularly in matters of law. Many others have since been created, and some are very popular with their easy natural rhythm.

happiness and joy  
will and testament  
son and heir  
law and order  
null and void  
breaking and entering  
assault and battery  
bits and pieces  
board and lodging  
safe and sound  
done and dusted

peace and quiet  
touch and go  
hit and miss  
house and home  
life and soul  
up and running  
now and then  
give and take  
here and there  
drunk and disorderly  
time and again

together. This practice continued with the influx of foreign and classical words, and is still alive and well in North America, from where we have words like **strip-tease**, **hangover** and **know-how**. The origin of **answer** accounts for its strange spelling: an Anglo-Saxon judge would turn to the defendant and before hearing a response to the charge would ask for the oath: 'and swear'.

Anglo-Saxons made use of suffixes such as **-wise**, **-bouts** and **-wards**. See how simple **-wise** can be: 'Job-wise she's very settled' (i.e. 'with respect to her job, she's very settled').

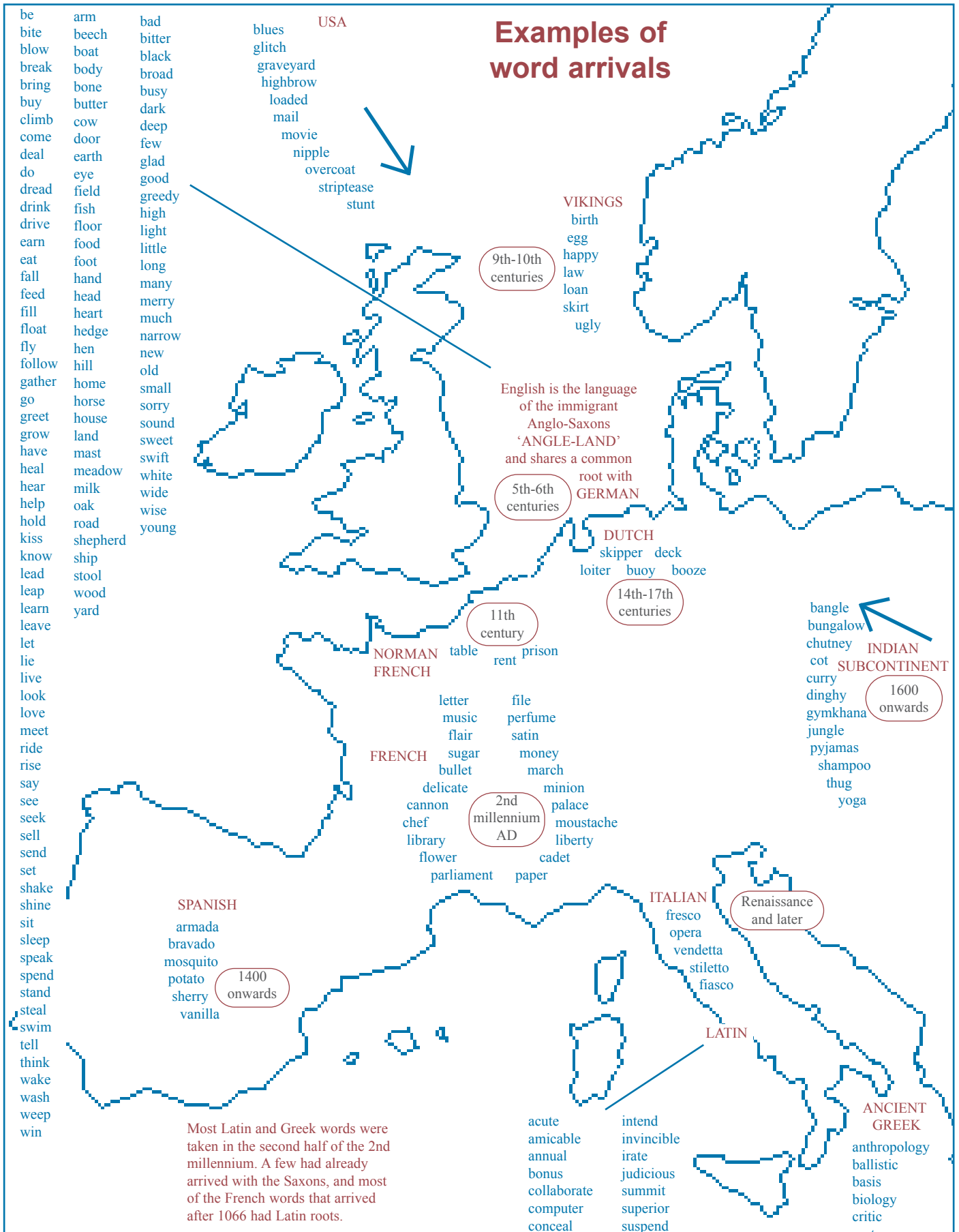
What meaning do these prefixes add to a word?

**anti** (anti-EC, anti-racism)  
**post** (post-vacation)  
**de** (devalue, derail)  
**pre** (pre-Christmas party)  
**sub** (subzero, subhuman)  
**re** (revisit, recharge)

Join words to create other words (some hundreds of years old, some more recent):

down	sight
over	out
fall	lasting
high	noon
law	date
after	fall
ever	stand
under	abiding
up	brow

# Origins of English



# Origins of English

Identify the four European languages from which these words were taken:

- a) armada, bravado, cigar, mosquito, potato, sherry, vanilla
- b) fresco, opera, stiletto, fiasco, vendetta, bank
- c) file, document, page, chair, palace, flair, embarrass, march
- d) landscape, cruise, easel, dock, skipper, yacht, hustle, loiter, smuggle, wagon, booze

The adjectives on the right were all created from Latin words and relate to the early English nouns on the left.

body	domestic
mother	solar
cattle	equestrian
hand	naval
home	bovine
sun	manual
ship	corporal
horse	maternal
kitchen	culinary

American words have been entering British English all through the 20th century. **Airport**, **loaded** (rich), **lot** (piece of land), **mail** (post), **mean** (nasty), **shades** (sunglasses) and **stunt** have long been at home on this side of the Atlantic. In America the old Anglo-Saxon habit of putting two words together to make a fresh one is thriving, and we have been quick to absorb them in the UK: **hangover**, **high-brow**, **hindsight**, **know-how**, **law-abiding**, **overtake**, **striptease** and **uptight**. The French helped America during the war for independence, and some of their words slipped into American English: there you will walk down a **boulevard**, and go up an **elevator** to get to your apartment. American words are often concrete expressions of abstract ideas, for example **bug** for **irritate**, **cut** for **reduction**, **blues** for **gloom**, and **fix** for **arrange**.

Some American words have a longer history than our own. The early settlers from Britain took a number of words that have since died out in the mother-country. The American **I guess** in the sense of 'I think' was used by the 14th century poet, Chaucer.

There are differences in spelling: America prefers **center** to British **centre**, **theater** to **theatre** and **defense** to **defence**, and drops the 'u' from **colour**, **honour** and **labour**. They spell the noun **licence** with an 's' like the verb **license** (UK officials seem to have adopted this now – either to be consistent or because they can't spell). America has **program** and **catalog** for **programme** and **catalogue**, they cash **checks** not **cheques**, buy **jewelry** not **jewellery** and in bed wear **pajamas** not **pyjamas**.

British words are on the left:

flat	apartment
lawyer	attorney
dressing gown	bathrobe
cupboard	closet
biscuit	cookie
receptionist	desk clerk
lift	elevator
autumn	fall
ground floor	first floor
petrol station	filling station
motorway	freeway
problem	glitch
stock	inventory
undertaker	mortician
film	movie
journalist	newsman
trousers	pants
road	pavement
prison	penitentiary
full stop	period
district	precinct
lay-by	pull-off
handbag	purse
railway	railroad
pavement	sidewalk
motorway	speedway

## ENGLISH TODAY

Today English is either the first or second language of almost everywhere, a spread that started with the British and their empire, and continues now with the Americans. The American economy is so powerful and their communication technology so successful that English is likely to remain the language of the world's politicians, scientists and airline pilots – not to mention the rest of us – for some time to come.

It is arguable that this growth into a world language isn't entirely down to political causes. Nourished with a richness of borrowing, English manages to be flexible and simple for beginners to learn relatively quickly – to a basic level at least. There's something in the language for everyone. The words **copy** and **imitate** are similar if not identical in meaning; and most Europeans will feel comfortable with at least one of them: **copy** belongs to the Germanic group and has cousin words in German and Dutch, while **imitate** comes from Latin and so will be recognised easily by speakers of Italian, French, Spanish and Portuguese. But a fuller understanding of these near synonyms isn't quite so straightforward. The price of all the loan-words that enrich the language is something of a tease for more advanced learners, who have to pick their way between subtle nuances in the search for the right idioms. A student once said to me 'I am a curious person'. Of course he meant inquisitive, not strange or weird.

It is a curious thing, our language, and I am always curious to learn more about it.

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