

ENGLISH B1

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ISBN: 978-84-9839-552-5

Legal Deposit: VG 727-2015

Authors: María Elena Centoira López, Lucía Fernández Rodríguez and Noemí Rodríguez Otero

Format: 21 x 29.7 cm

Pages: 314

Printed in Spain-Impreso en España

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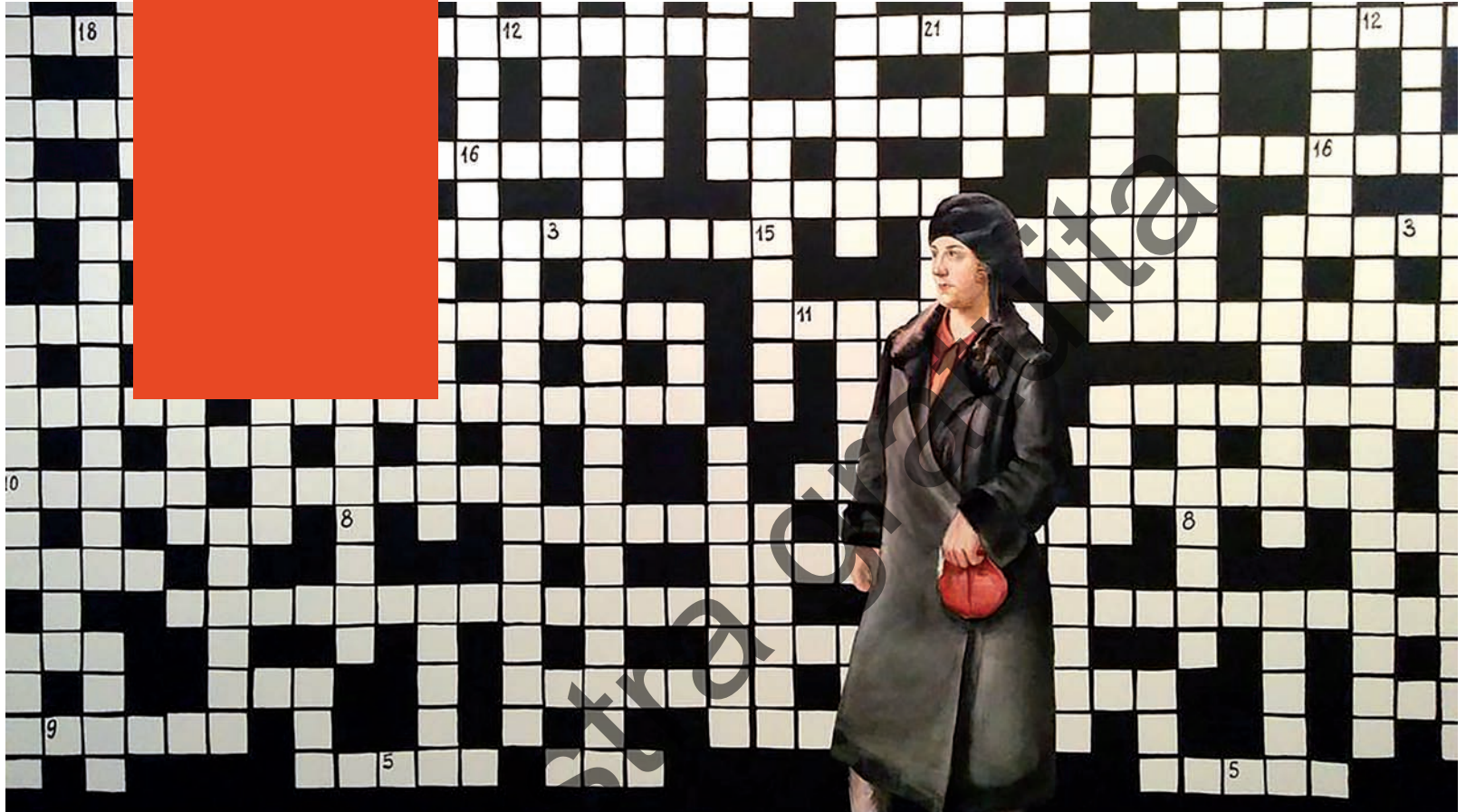
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1.

Lexical and semantic contents



Contents



- 1. Lexical and semantic contents
 - 1.1. Introduction
 - 1.2. Vocabulary
 - 1.3. Morphology and word formation
 - 1.4. Meaning

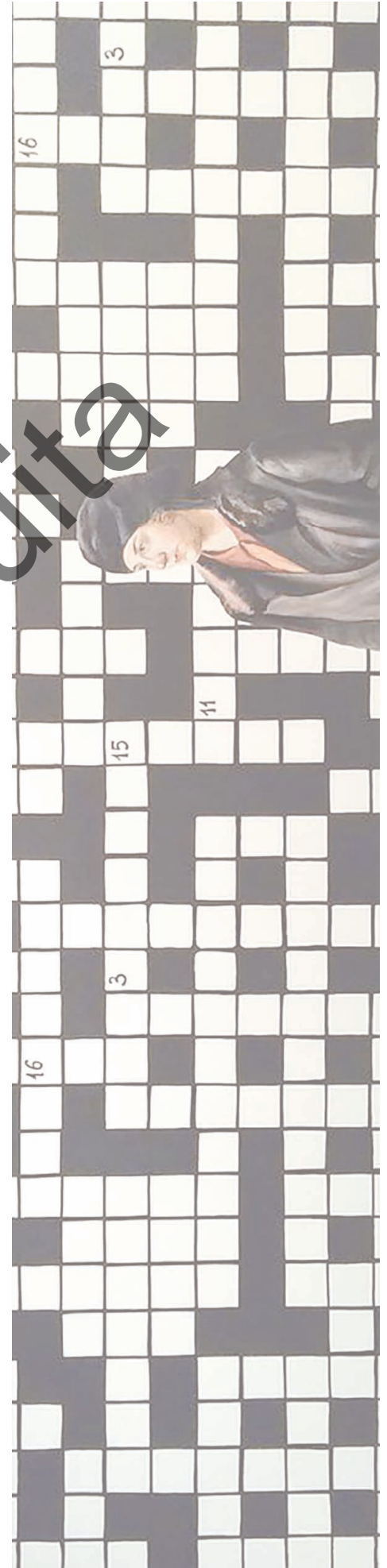
Aims

- To learn vocabulary and linguistic expressions related to common situations in everyday life.
- To recognize and identify word formation methods.
- To distinguish the most common affixes: prefixes and suffixes.
- To identify words through their semantic relationship: synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and polysemy.

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The learning of a vocabulary lesson includes three main aspects: semantic knowledge, phonetic and orthographic knowledge and grammatical knowledge. These three components (meaning, form and use respectively) are not independent but closely related to one another so that a student learning a second language can assimilate and understand the new words.



1.1. Introduction

Communicating in English implies knowing a wide range of vocabulary which should be increasing as the student evolves in the ongoing process of learning this language. This teaching unit is aimed at meeting this objective.

Firstly, the student will study new vocabulary related to different areas in everyday life, as well as common expressions in English. Besides, this teaching unit provides the keys to understand stereotypical comparisons very frequently used in English and to assimilate the features of some complex verbs.

Secondly, it provides explanations about the main methods of word formation, especially of nouns and adjectives, as well as the most common cases of nominalization, acronyms and abbreviations.

Finally, this teaching unit also analyses the semantic phenomena which affect English language: synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and polysemy. For closure, it also includes some lexical differences between BrE (British English) and AmE (American English).

1.2. Vocabulary

The speakers and the writers need to develop a strong vocabulary to express easier their ideas. In case of writing it is also especially important to avoid repetition. Even if they are speaking or writing in their own native language, it is necessary to use clear and precise vocabulary, but when the language used is a second one difficulty increases to a large extent.

Sokolik distinguishes between active and passive vocabulary. The speakers' or writers' active vocabulary is what they use in speaking or writing, whereas passive one is what is understood while listening or reading. The key to strength one's vocabulary is to turn passive into active words. It is a long process: probably it never ends. In the following sections, different ways to improve vocabulary will be shown.

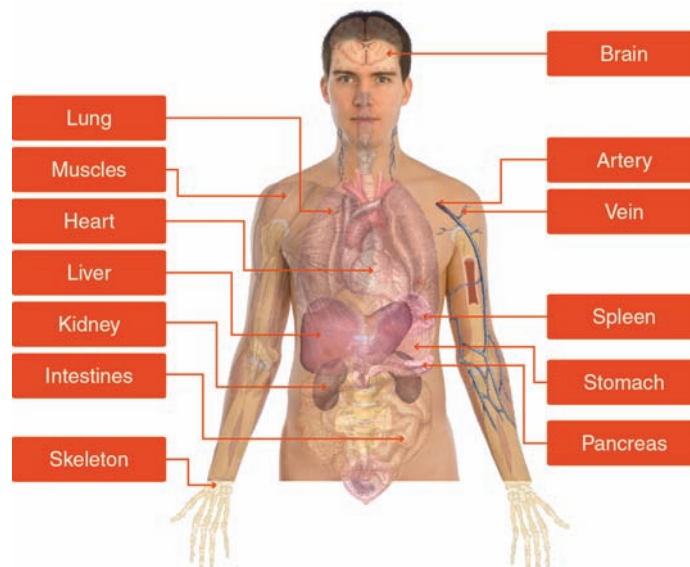
1.2.1. Enlargement of vocabulary and frequently used expressions

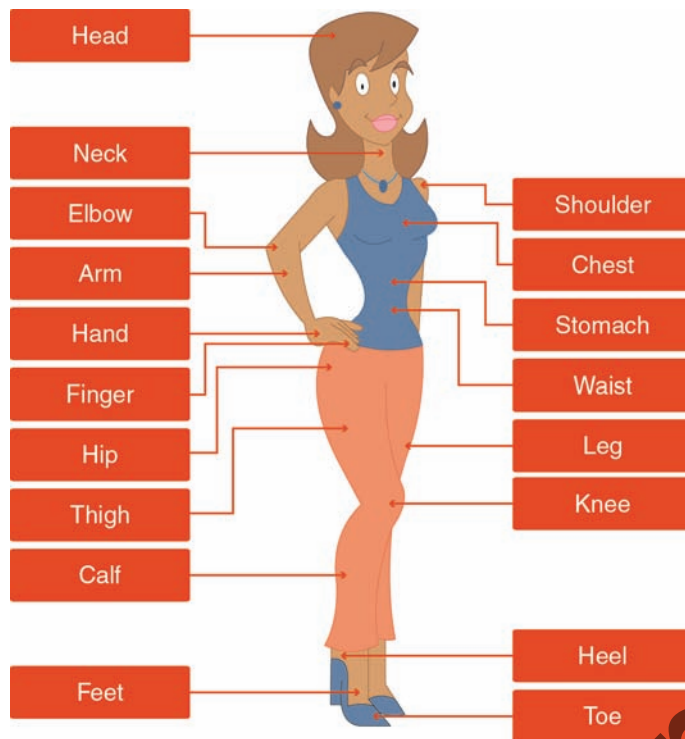
! Important

We will henceforth use the abbreviations «BrE» and «AmE» when talking about British English and American English respectively.

Now we are going to enlarge our vocabulary by learning new words from common contexts of our everyday life.

To begin with, we are going to learn new terms related to external and internal organs and parts of the **human body**. Knowing these words is useful, for example, when somebody needs to talk about a disease and its symptoms at a doctor's office or at the hospital.





There are many common expressions including different members or parts of the human body, for instance when people talk about an injured or a broken arm or a swollen leg, or when somebody says that the blood runs through the arteries and veins of the whole body. Unlike in Spanish «leg» is used for both humans and animals in English.

To have one arm in a sling is normal when someone has broken a bone in this part of the body.

The football player has got a broken arm so it will take him several months to be totally healed.

I was hospitalized with a broken arm to be operated.

The racehorse seems to have a swollen leg.

After surgery I had my arm in a sling for fifteen days.

Human respiratory system is centred on a set of two lungs, the right and the left lung. We also have two kidneys, but only one liver. Lung cancer and pneumonia are severe lung diseases.

We talk about diseases when an internal organ of the body is ill, for instance a kidney disease or a liver disease. If someone has an accident, he/she can suffer damage in several parts of his/her body. People can also suffer of kidney failure (in this case removing a kidney may be necessary) or fatty liver. We should control our heart rate, that is, our heart's rhythm, when playing sports. Tobacco and alcohol increase the risk for a heart attack. Due to severe heart disease, the specialist can conclude that an open-heart surgery is the only solution. Moderate daily exercise is good for our health because, inter alia, it reduces the risk for stroke, also called ictus or cerebral infarct.

He suffered from kidney failure so his right kidney was removed by surgery.

Fatty liver can degenerate into cirrhosis.

The accident has caused him serious brain damage.

The main vocabulary words related to the parts of the eye are: eyelash, eyebrow, pupil, iris, upper and lower eyelid. When you make up you usually apply one coat of mascara on the lashes from the root to add volume. The coloured area of the eye is called the iris. To check vision the eye specialist (oculist) prescribes eye drops that make the patient's pupil dilate. If you feel like something is in your eye it



?? Did you know...?

When people feel in danger in extreme situations they shout for help at the top of his lungs.



can be a symptom of scratched cornea. Cataracts and macular degeneration are common eye diseases associated with old age. When you are tired and sleepy you use to have droopy eyelids.

There are more than six hundred muscles in the human body and the tongue is considered the strongest of all. In addition, the Achilles tendon is the thickest muscle in the human body. The foot is the part of the body where there are more bones, 26 in all. Furthermore, the foot's bones are the smallest of the whole body.

You should also know the parts of the hand.



Common expressions and meanings including parts of the body are the following.

Expression	Meaning
To be a pain in the neck	It refers to somebody whom the speaker cannot put up with
Give me five/High five	It refers to a gesture in which two people slap the palms of their hands (over their heads) to seal a deal or to celebrate something
Hand over fist	It means to do something quickly and continuously
My mind's eye	It refers to the speaker's visual memory or imagination
Keep your hands clean/Keep your nose clean	It is an advice given to someone warning to stay out of any problem
Out of sight, out of mind	It conveys the idea of forgetting something or someone you are no longer seeing
Play by ear	It is said when someone plays a musical instrument in an autodidactic way. Sometimes this expression is also used when someone handles or manages a situation without any previous training or experience
To put one's back up	It is said when someone is very angry. This expression comes from the movement casts do when they feel in danger or get angry
Take the bit between your teeth	It is said to someone when we want that person takes a situation under control
Thumbs up	It is a sign of acceptance
Turn a blind eye	It is used when someone refuses to see or know something that everybody knows is true

Some of the professionals working in **hospitals** are nurses, assistant nurses, doctors, general practitioners and medical specialists.

Vocabulary

A nursemaid is a person in charge of looking after babies or small children in their own houses. This person can be affectionately called nanny. He or she is contracted on a long term basis. However, a babysitter is the term used to refer to a person occasionally contracted to take care of the children.

A nurse is a professional who helps a doctor to take care of sick or injured people. «Nurse» can also be a verb meaning to care for sick or injured people. An assistant nurse is a professional who provides basic care for patients.

A nursery is a kind of school for babies or little children where they are cared while their parents are at work. In addition, nursery sometimes refers to places where little plants are cultivated or where fish larvae are bred.

A midwife is a person trained to assist women when they have their babies, who must not be confused with the figure of a matron who is a person in charge of the nurses in a hospital, also called senior nursing officer.

A doctor is a professional trained in medical science. Dr is the abbreviation. A doctor who performs medical operations is called a surgeon.

At a hospital, there are GPs (General Practitioners) and medical specialists. A GP takes care of sick or injured people at an early stage. When a patient requires attention to a specific organ of the body, that person is attended by medical specialists. There are many medical specialties; the more common are detailed in the chart below.

Specialty	Medical specialist
Anaesthesiology	Anaesthetist
Cardiology	Cardiologist
Dermatology	Dermatologist
Gastroenterology	Stomatologist
Gynaecology	Gynaecologist
Internal medicine	Internist
Neurology	Neurologist
Obstetrics	Obstetrician
Orthopaedics	Orthopaedic specialist
Paediatrics	Paediatrician
Psychiatry	Psychiatrist
Traumatology	Traumatologist
Urology	Urologist

?? Did you know...?

The title of Doctor can be also applied to a person who has got the highest university degree, for instance Doctor of Pharmacy or Doctor of Philosophy.

The following are common expressions used in medical contexts.

- To perform an operation.
- To treat or cure an illness or a disease.
- To write or give a prescription.
- To feel sick or ill.
- To take blood pressure.
- To take a temperature (if fever is suspected).
- To give an injection.
- To give a diagnosis.
- Vaccination campaigns.
- Vaccination card.
- Organ donation.
- To donate an organ.
- Bone marrow donor.

Sometimes the doctors require the patients to do some special tests or diagnosis testing such as a scan, an X-ray photograph, a blood test, a sonogram, a biopsy or a MR (Magnetic Resonance). After diagnosis, the patients have to follow the treatment plan sometimes consisting on surgical interventions or on taking some drugs (medicines).

- To have painkillers.
- To have injections.
- To have keyhole surgery (for instance, on a knee).
- To have vascular surgery.
- To remove an organ.
- To receive a heart transplant.
- To remove a tumour.
- To fix a torn tendon.

To describe people or to say what people look like we need to know some words, particularly adjectives. The **physical description of a person** must include the characteristics of his/her eyes and hair, for example.

«Short», «long», «medium length» and «shoulder length» are adjectives used to describe the length of the hair.

He has got short hair.

She has got long hair.

She has got shoulder length hair.

«Straight», «curly» and «wavy» are adjectives used to describe the shape of the hair.

He has got straight hair.

She has got wavy hair.

She has got curly hair.

«Blond», «brown», «black», «white», «grey» and «red» are used to describe the hair colour. You can also say «brunette» to refer to a woman with brown hair; in the same way «blonde» refers to a woman with fair or blond hair. Finally a «redhead» is a red haired person.

He has got blond hair.

She has got brown hair.

They have got red hair.

My grandma has got white hair and my granddad has got grey hair.

My brother is dating stunning brunette.

Do you know that blonde? She is a beauty.

Check it out!

When you want describe a person, you must know different verbs: to be, to have and to wear. In the next web page you can read how to use them: bit.ly/1G94xoo.



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Do you know any redhead?

Of course, my father and my father's father are redheads but I am brown haired like my mother.

When you combine several adjectives you must follow the standard rule which dictates the correct order of adjectives in a phrase: general description + size + shape + colour.

She has got a beautiful long straight black hair.

Her hair is beautiful, long, straight and black.

He has got short curly blond hair.

His hair is short, curly and blond.

He has got small blue eyes.

His eyes are small and blue.

She has got big blue eyes.

Her eyes are big and blue.

Other common expressions follow the structure adjective + «-haired»/«-eyed». You can use these expressions with or without the hyphen: short-haired or short haired.

Long-haired hippies.

Short-haired dogs.

There are many red-haired people in Ireland.

People belonging to the Indian race use to be black-haired and black-eyed.

Jane: What do you look like?

Lucy: I'm medium height. My eyes are blue and my hair is red. I'm tall and I look really trendy. I've got a piercing in my nose.

Jane: What colour is your hair?

Lucy: I've got long, black hair.

Jane: What clothes do you like to wear?

Lucy: I like wearing tops with hoods and denim clothes.

The structure to have + object + past participle implies that another person does a **service** for us. Note the difference between the following sentences.

I fixed my computer (I did it by myself).

I had my computer fixed (Another person did it for me).

«To get» can be used instead of «to have».

She got her computer repaired.

Some common sentences using this structure are: to have my hair cut, to have my car washed, to have my watch fixed or to have my car repaired.

Robert: Where did you have your hair cut?

Marc: I've gone to my life-long hairdresser.

Robert: Great! You really look cool!

Marc: Thanks!

Sometimes this kind of structure is used for bad things.

I had my wallet stolen yesterday.

Peter had his arm broken in a car crash.

You should learn some vocabulary words about common services. A cobbler's is a place where you can have your shoes fixed. A hairdresser's is a place where you can have your hair cut. An optician's is a place where you can have your eyes checked. A garage is a place where you can have your car repaired. A dentist's is a place where you can have your teeth checked. A clock and watch shop is a place where you can have your watch repaired. A dry cleaner's is a place where you can have your suit cleaned.

Note that laundry and dry-cleaning services are generally offered by a kind of establishment called «laundry and dry-cleaning». They usually offer full delivery service at your doorstep but if you prefer you can schedule your customized pickups.

«Mend», «repair» and «fix» are very common verbs in daily conversations. The use of these three verbs is quite confusing in English since their meaning are similar. «To mend» is used with things which are broken or damaged and it is mainly used when talking about clothes or human relationships.

I went to the dressmaker's to have my dress mended.

My parents are visiting a marriage consultant to try to mend their relationship.

But «mend» is more used in the United Kingdom than in the USA (United States of America) where they prefer the word «fix».



«Fix» and «repair» mean essentially the same thing, we can say that «fix» is less formal than «repair».

My father fixed the washing machine; he had to change a broken pulley inside the engine.

We got our roof repaired because it leaked when it rained a lot.

My father is taking his car for being repaired because it is not working properly.

There are many different **places in town** where we can go to: churches, cathedrals, banks, dance clubs, pubs, cafeterias or cafés, monuments, exhibition centres, libraries, primary schools, high schools, colleges, book shops, clothes shops, butcher's shops, baker's shops, fish shops, etc.



Street



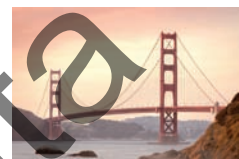
Avenue



Square



Fountain



Bridge

Places in town	
Place	Meaning
Cinema	A theatre where films are shown for public
Department store	A large shop stocking many varieties of goods in different departments
Grocery	A shop where a person sells food and small household goods
Hospital	An institution providing medical and surgical treatment and nursing care for sick or injured people
Hotel	An establishment providing accommodation, meals, and other services for travellers and tourist
Hypermarket	A very large self-service store with a wide range of goods and a large car park, typically situated outside a town
Inn	A pub, typically one in the country, in some cases providing accommodation
Ironmonger's shop (BrE)/Hardware store	A shop selling hardware such as tools and household implements
Market	A regular gathering of people for the purchase and sale of provisions, livestock and other commodities
	An open space or covered building where vendors convene to sell their goods
Museum	A building in which objects of historical, scientific, artistic, or cultural interest are stored and exhibited
Pharmacy, chemist's shop (BrE)/Drugstore (AmE)	A shop where medicinal drugs are dispensed and sold, and in which toiletries and other medical goods can be purchased
Restaurant	A place where people pay to sit and eat meals that are cooked and served on the premises
Shopping centre	An area or complex of shops
Supermarket	A large self-service shop selling foods and household goods
Theatre	A building or outdoor area in which plays and other dramatic performances are given
Town hall	A building used for the administration of local government

Source: Oxford Dictionaries (oxforddictionaries.com)

In the street we can find: traffic lights, traffic signs, zebra crossings, telephone booths, vending machines, pavements, kiosks, paper bins, billboards, post boxes, bus stops, bus shelters, benches and other pieces of urban furniture.



Billboard



Post box



Bus shelter



Benches

We can use a large list of adjectives to describe places.

Adjectives to describe places	
Adjective	Meaning
Awesome	Extremely impressive or daunting; inspiring awe
Awful	Very bad or unpleasant
Chic	Elegantly and stylishly fashionable
Colossal	Extremely large or great
Colourful	Having much or varied colour; bright
	Full of interest; lively and exciting
Crowded	(Of a space) full of people, leaving little or no room for movement; packed
Elegant	Graceful and stylish in appearance or manner
Enormous	Very large in size, quantity, or extent
Exuberant	Full of energy, excitement, and cheerfulness
	Characterized by a vigorously imaginative artistic style
Gigantic	Of very great size or extent; huge or enormous
Huge	Extremely large; enormous
Luxurious	Extremely comfortable or elegant, especially when involving great expense
Marvellous	Causing great wonder; extraordinary
	Extremely good or pleasing; splendid
Old-fashioned	In or according to styles or types no longer current; not modern
Picturesque	(Of a place or building) visually attractive, especially in a quaint or charming way
Posh	Elegant or stylishly luxurious
	Typical of or belonging to the upper class (BrE)
Quiet	(Of a place, period of time, or situation) without much activity, disturbance, or excitement
Shabby	In poor condition through long use or lack of care
Stunning	Extremely impressive or attractive
Tiny	Very small
Vast	Of very great extent or quantity; immense

Source: Oxford Dictionaries (oxforddictionaries.com)

The following sentences include some of the above mentioned adjectives to describe different places such as cities or monuments.

The pharmacy was so crowded that I had to stand in a long queue for more than half an hour before being attended.

The facade of the cathedral was flanked by three gigantic columns.

Park Güell in Barcelona is a vast and colourful public park located in Barcelona and is one of the most famous works of Antonio Gaudi. It is really a picturesque landscape.

I could enjoy a stunning view of the bay from the hotel window.

For me Saint Peter's Square in the Vatican City is one of the most awesome squares in the world.

I was born in a tiny but elegant village called Chipping Campden.

During my stay in Clovelly I was accommodated in a shabby but quiet hotel called The Queen's House.

The sight of the city from the top of this building is marvellous.

There are many colossal monuments and statues around the world but I want to point out three of them: The Great Buddha of Thailand, the Statue of Liberty in New York and Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

This is a huge shopping centre where we can offer all you need.

Vocabulary

A facade (or façade), following Oxford Dictionaries, is «the principal front of a building, that faces on to a street or open space».

Ibiza is one of the most chosen places to live by rich people perhaps because it is an exuberant place where you can live happily and securely.

Kensington is considered one of the most posh and expensive areas in London.

My uncle John runs a small chic bistro in the centre of the village.

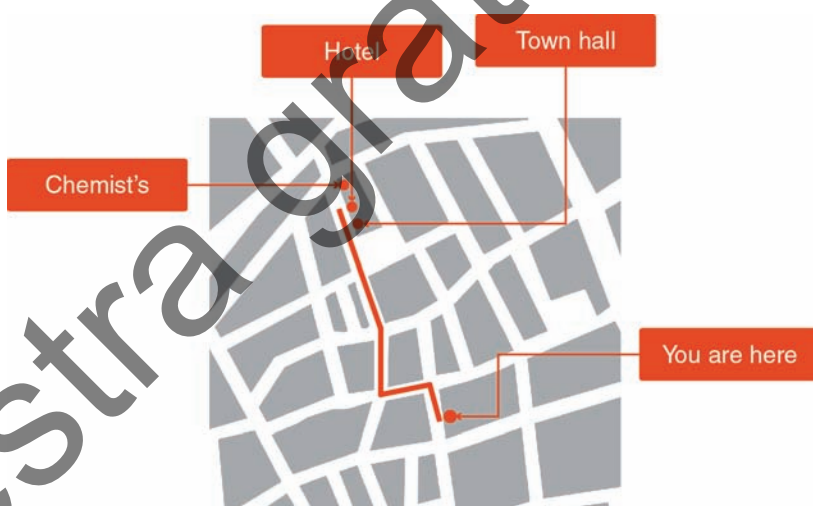
We stopped on the way for breakfast in an awful and old-fashioned cafeteria and had a coffee and a croissant.

Now we are going to learn some vocabulary words used when **asking and giving directions**. If you get lost in the middle of a city that you do not know you can ask someone in the street: How can I get to the nearest taxi rank? Where is the train station? or My hotel is The Queen's House; do you know where it is?

There are different ways to give directions in English. The person whom you have asked the last question (My hotel is The Queen's House; do you know where it is?) can answer, for example, giving the following instructions:

Your hotel is on Channel Street, between the chemist's and the town hall. Go ahead until the next turning on the left. Turn left and go straight on until the next crossroads. Go right and go ahead until you find the hotel on your right.

Common expressions to give directions	
Go left Turn left Take the second (turning) on the left Take a left It's on the left	
Go right Turn right Take the second (turning) on the right Take a right It's on the right	
Go ahead Go straight ahead Go straight on	



Check it out!
 You can practice vocabulary and do activities about asking and giving directions in the following links:
bit.ly/1GG5Qwe and bit.ly/1DS50KI.



Sometimes people talk about free time activities. **Practicing sports is a common topic**. Depending on the sport we are referring to, we use a different verb: do, go or play.

«Do» is used with martial arts: do tae kwon do, do yoga, do kung fu, do karate, do sumo, do judo, do t'ai chi or do ju-jitsu. «Do» is also used with some sports performed in groups: do athletics, do aerobics or do gymnastics.

I'd like to do tae kwon do or kung fu.

I do athletics twice a week in a sports centre near my house.

My mother used to do gymnastics when she was a child.

My best friend and I do aerobics on Saturdays.

«Play» is used in general for most of competitive sports, that is, sports when you play to win: play football, play basketball, play tennis, play table tennis, play badminton, play volleyball, play beach volleyball, play handball, play ice hockey, play golf, play rugby, play cricket and play paddle tennis.

Peter plays table tennis in the local team.

We are going to play cricket on Sunday.

Pau Gasol plays basketball.

When I was a child, I used to play football with my friends.

«Go» is often used with sports ending in «-ing». Normally you can practice these sports alone: go swimming, go diving, go sailing, go skiing, go ice-skating, go kayaking, go surfing, go windsurfing, go cycling or go hunting.

My father likes to go sport fishing.

I go fencing in a famous fencing school in London.

We go hiking in our free time.

«Ride» is used with activities consisting on getting on top of something: to ride on horse (to go on horseback), to ride a bike or a bicycle (to go over a bike or a bicycle), to ride a motorbike (to go over a motorbike) or to ride on boat. Besides, «ride» can also be a noun meaning fairground attraction.

Mary likes riding.

The rollercoaster is my favourite ride in the amusement park..

Reading is a typical activity in our free time. In the front cover of the book we can find the title and the name of the author. Some people buy books if their illustrations are attractive. Sometimes the back cover of books includes a resume of the argument or some information about the author. When you put your books on shelves, you can also read the title and the writer's name in their spine.



I've just read a book by Maria Gripe titled *The Beetles Fly at Dusk*. It is a novel aimed at teenagers but really very interesting for adult people too. I recommend you to read it.



! Important

«To take someone for a ride» means to take someone on a leisure tour: Come on, get into the car and I'll take you for a ride.

There are many adjectives used to describe a book: action-packed (full of events), adventurous (telling risky actions), biographical (about somebody's life), boring (unexciting), captivating (fascinating), brilliant (extremely smart), emotional, exciting, futuristic (related to science fiction), hilarious (very funny), informative, mysterious, realistic (like real life), romantic (telling a romance), scary (frightening), simple or terrifying.

People usually practice sports or do another activities like reading or watching TV in their free time. People enjoy their free time mainly on holiday periods, on public holidays or on marked **festivities**. We are going to learn the most important festivities in some English speaking countries. You can see them in the following chart.

Month	Festivity
January	New Year's Day
February	Saint Valentine's Day
March	Saint Patrick's Day
July	Independence's Day (USA)
October	Halloween
November	Thanksgiving Day (USA)
December	Christmas Eve Christmas Day New Year's Eve



New Year's Day is the first day of the year in the Western calendar, also called the Christian calendar, which is the most internationally used civil calendar all over the world. So, New Year's Day is for sure the most celebrated public holiday.

Saint Valentine's Day is celebrated in many countries around the world on 14th February. It's also called the lover's day.

Saint Patrick's Day commemorates the death of Saint Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, on 17th March. This day is the national Irish holiday but it is also widely celebrated all over the world with religious events like religious processions as well as with pagan celebrations like Saint Patrick's Day parade in Dublin, London or New York. During Saint Patrick's celebrations people wear green clothes or accessories being the shamrock (a three-leaved plant that stands for the Holy Trinity) the most commonly used.



Easter, also called Pasch, is a religious festivity. The week before Easter is called the Holy Week which represents the last week of Jesus Christ's life. Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus. Easter holidays are moveable feasts, that is, they are not fixed days in the Christian or Western calendar. In many countries, like in Britain, Easter eggs or Easter rabbits are typical during these days.

Independence Day is celebrated in the USA. It commemorates the Declaration of Independence on 4th July, 1776.

Halloween is a pagan festivity, also called All Saint's Eve. It is celebrated in many countries on 31st October. It has a Celtic origin and is widely known as the death's festivity. Typical activities on Halloween are trick or treating or attending Halloween parties where peoples dress as zombies or walking dead; and typical decorations are carving pumpkins with jack-o'-lanterns which represent the souls of the dead.

?? Did you know...?

Britain can refer both to the United Kingdom, which is a sovereign state, and to Great Britain, which is an island.

Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday celebrated in the USA on the 4th Sunday of November. It traditionally commemorated the harvest day, the day on which family gathered to give thanks for the harvest season. This holiday continues still today. Turkey is the typical meal for lunch or dinner. Black Friday is the Friday following Thanksgiving Day and it is considered the beginning of the Christmas shopping period. On Black Friday most of the retail stores offer promotional sales.

Christmas Day is celebrated in most of the countries all over the world, especially in Western Christianity. It is a religious holiday which commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ on 25th December. Christmas Eve is the day before Christmas Day, on 24th December. During these days families gather for lunch and dinner, sing Christmas carols and they decorate houses and cities with Christmas lights, trees and other typical Christmas decorations. At Christmas time some gift-bearing figures like Santa Claus, Father Christmas or Saint Nicholas bring presents to all the members of the family, but especially to children.

New Year's Eve is the last day of the year in the Western calendar, that is, the 31st December. It is also called Saint Sylvester's Day or Old Year's Day. This day people usually attend parties to celebrate the transition to the New Year. On 1st January they celebrate New Year's Day.

When people are planning their vacation, they use to worry about the **weather**. To ask about the weather people usually make the following question: What's the weather like?

The following sentences are examples of common weather expressions.

It's sunny (when the sun is shining and the sky is blue).

It's windy (when the wind is blowing).

It's raining (raindrops falling).

It's snowing (snowflakes falling).

It's hailing (hailstones falling).

It's sleeting (sleet not as solid as hailstones or snowflakes but not as liquid as water).

It's cloudy (when the sky is spotted with clouds it is partly cloudy but when the sky is full of clouds, that is, an overcast sky, it is very cloudy).

It's foggy (when a layer of dense fog or mist reduces the visibility).

It's freezing (it is as cold that a layer of frost is created on the ground).

It's stormy (highly unstable weather, with heavy showers, thunder and lightning).

It's hot (the temperature is very high).

It's warm (the temperature is nice and pleasant).

It's cooling down (the temperature is dropping).

It's cold (the temperature is very low).

We can distinguish various kinds of rain in English. To drizzle or mizzle are used when it falls light or misty rain, whereas, when there is heavy rain we can say that it's raining torrentially or raining cats and dogs. In this case the rain is called a «downpour». Light rainfall is generally called «sprinkling» in AmE and «shower» in BrE. A rainstorm occurs when suddenly it rains heavily, sometimes causing flash floods in the low areas or rivers overflowing which can carry away everything in its path. In addition, the shortage of rain causes drought. In addition, a thunderstorm is a lightning storm.

The snowmelt is also called «slush». When the snowmelt or the water from the rain freezes it produces frost and ice.

When it rains raindrops fall down and when it snows snowflakes fall instead. After a heavy snow children usually enjoy making a snowperson. The melting of the snow that covers the mountains can produce avalanches.

The dew is produced by the condensation of the humidity or the moisture in the atmosphere.

The rainbow appears in the sky when it rains and the sun shines at the same time.



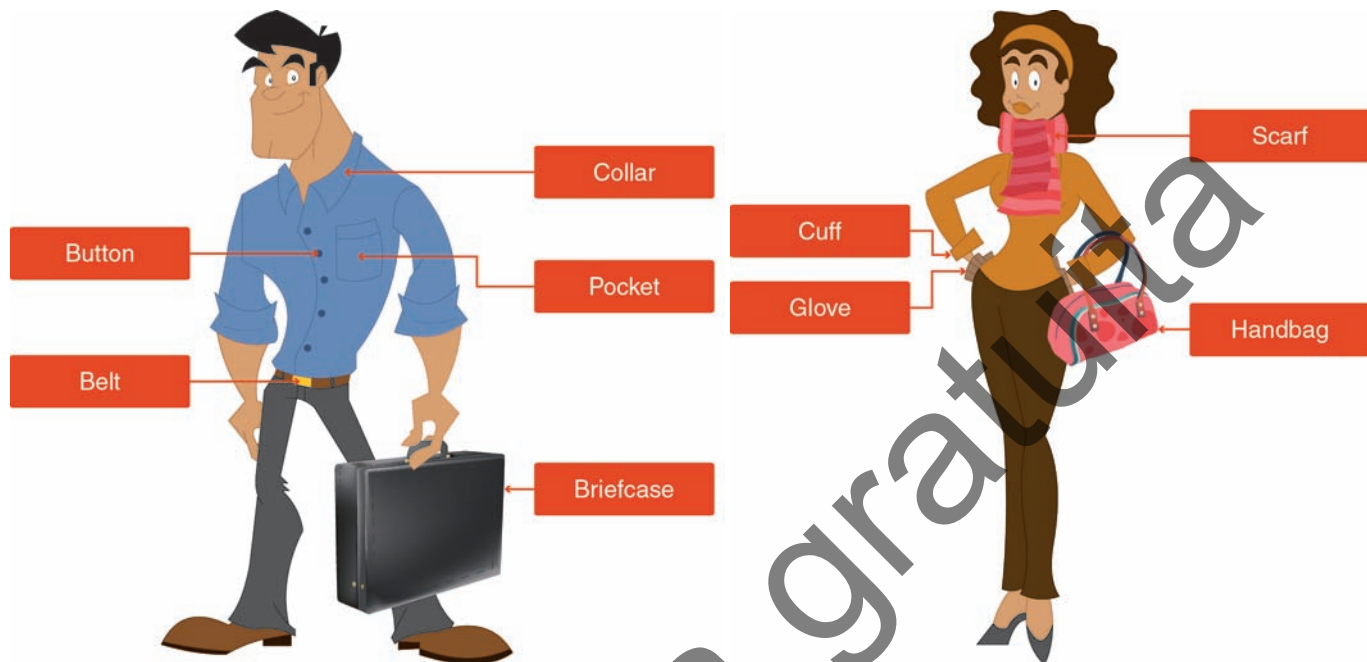
?? Did you know...?

The area in the world where tornados are more frequent is located in the USA. This area, colloquially known as Tornado Alley comprises northern Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. In a year more than one thousand tornados are reported in this area.



A tornado occurs when a column of rotating air descends from a thunderstorm to the ground. A tornado can destroy large buildings or trees and can hurl vehicles some kilometres away.

Depending on the weather, people wear different **clothes**. «Sweater», «jumper» and «pullover» are words with similar meanings (synonyms) but their uses are sometimes different depending on the area and the variety of English spoken there.



In the United Kingdom the three words refer to garment knitted in wool or cotton, with no buttons, that is, it is not opened at the front. It is pulled over the head. People wear it to keep themselves warm.

In the USA «jumper» is a kind of girl's dress without sleeves which it is usually dressed over a blouse, called «pinafore» in BrE. For American, «sweater» is the equivalent of «sweater», «jumper» and «pullover» in the United Kingdom. Besides, in the USA a buttoned cardigan can also be called «sweater». Finally, «pullover» is rarely used by Americans.

«Jersey» is an item similar to the one described above, that is, an unbuttoned item made of wool or cotton with long leaves which people pull over their head to keep them warm. But a jersey can also be a shirt used in some team sports which includes the team's and the player's name as well as the logos of the team and the sponsors. This item is one of the pieces of the team's uniform.

You can buy a shirt in a clothes' shop where you can find the standard sizes. In this case you have to find the size which perfectly fits you by trying on different sizes. But, the best option, without a doubt, is to go to a tailor shop where the tailor (a man) or the dressmaker (a woman) will take your measures to make a handcraft and made to measure shirt. Furthermore, you have the added advantage of choosing the fabric and colour you like best.

Formal men's wear consists of a shirt with tie under a suit. The suit is made up of a jacket combined with formal trousers. Men use these clothes in formal and business situations. In informal contexts and other situations men use to wear a casual shirt with no tie combined with casual trousers or shorts. «Shorts» are short leg trousers specially used in summer.

Many people consider «pants» and «trousers» as synonyms but it is not entirely true. Americans refer to underwear as «shorts». For them a «pair of pants» is the piece of clothing to cover shorts in public. However, «pants» in the United Kingdom

?? Did you know...?

Note that the structure «short-legged» is used for animals: short-legged dogs.



refer to underwear while «trousers» refer to the public wear which covers the pants. For them «pants» are for men what «panties» are for women while «shorts» are short trousers especially used in summer.

You need shoe polish and a shoe brush to clean your shoes. When you need to repair your shoes, you have a cobbler fix them. Some shoes have shoelaces like trainers.

Check it out!
 For more information about shoes: history, design and style you can visit Bata Shoe Museum webpage: www.batashoemuseum.ca.

Expression	Meaning
Someone is as tough as old boots	A person who is a very strong
I wouldn't like to be in your shoes	The speaker knows that the other person is in a particularly difficult situation
A place is as comfortable as an old shoes	It means that that place is very comfortable and familiar
To fill someone's shoes	It means to replace another person and to do his or her job as well as he or she

The following are some verbs and phrasal verbs used in this context of clothing.

«To wear» means to have clothing on. It is an irregular verb (wear, wore, worn). «To clothe» means to dress, that is, to put clothes on, but it is more used in conversation. «To get dressed» and «to get undressed» means to put clothes on and take them off respectively.

I'm wearing some jeans and a white t-shirt.

She is dressing in her dressing room.

Get dressed as soon as possible, please. It's getting late and it's time to leave.

The doctor ordered the patient to get undressed for a check-up.

«To buckle» and «to unbuckle» mean to fasten and unfasten a piece of clothing or some shoes using a buckle. «To button» and «to unbutton» mean to fasten or unfasten a piece of clothing or some shoes using buttons. «To zip up» and «to zip down» mean to fasten or unfasten a piece of clothing or some shoes using a zip.

My mother buckled my shoes when I was a child.

Button up your raincoat before going outside.

It's really hot; I'm going to zip my jacket down.

Did you know...?
 Cowboys wear spurs on their boots to control their horses and to signal commands to them. American cowboys began to use them when they saw them being used by the Spanish conquerors that arrived in Mexico in the 16th century.

People live in communities and relate to one another. There are different kinds of **relationships**: family relationships, friendly relationships, love relationships or employment relationships.

Your workmates or colleagues are those people you work with. Sometimes they even turn into close friends.

Your best friend is a person to whom you feel a strong affection, that is, you may love that person as if he or she were your sibling. In any case, whoever has a friend has a treasure.

Sometimes, most of the times when you are not expecting it, you meet a charming and interesting person and you fall in love with that person. It may be love at first sight or the result of a previous friendly relationship. When two persons are in love they begin a love affair, dating and going out together.

After a while they may be finally engaged. In this case they use to fix a wedding date. The fiancé usually gives a commitment ring to his fiancée to seal their commitment. The marriage may be civil or religious. In the former case the wedding is celebrated at courts before a judge or at the town hall before the mayor. In the latter case the wedding is conducted at church before a priest. During the wedding ceremony the bride and the groom give a wedding ring to each other as a sign of loyalty and fidelity. After the wedding feast the newlyweds use to go on a honeymoon before starting a new life together.

Well-matched married couples can even celebrate their silver wedding after being married for 25 years or their golden wedding after being married for 50 years.

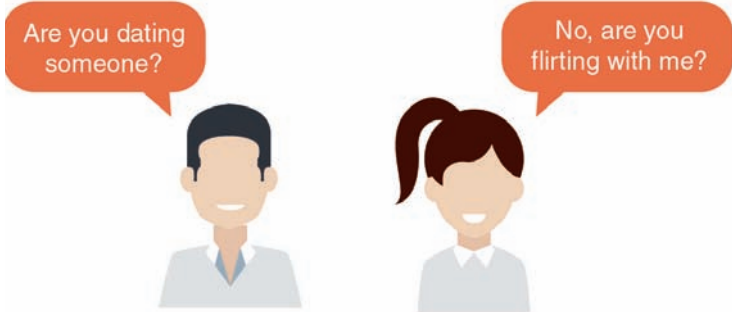
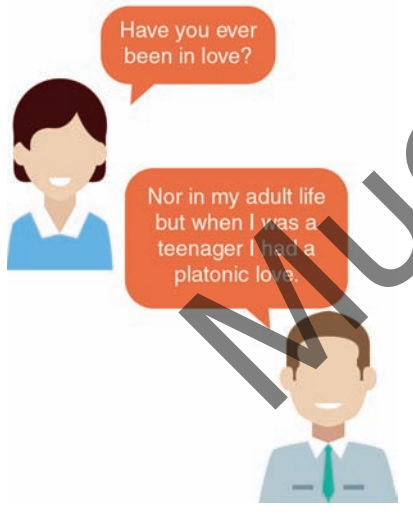
Sometimes, people suffer marital breakdowns. In that case they decide to separate or divorce. Many married couples get on each other and love and live together until parted by death. The saddest moments in the story of a long happy marriage are when the husband or the wife becomes a widower or a widow respectively.

Nowadays there are several family models. Homosexual marriage or same-sex marriage has been legalized in many countries. In some of these countries the adoption of children by same-sex couples is even allowed so that they can create their own family. There are also single-parent families, that is, when a single man or woman decides to raise his or her children alone, in this case they are also called lone parents. Furthermore, one can often find couples who have decided not to have any children.

Brian: Are you single or married?
 Edward: I'm divorced.
 Brian: When did you get married?
 Edward: I married my ex-wife when we were at university.
 Brian: Are you in a relationship now?
 Edward: Yes, I'm living a beautiful love story.

?? Did you know...?

We talk about a platonic love when two people have an affectionate relationship but they never begin a love relationship or a love affair. A platonic love involves one person who loves another, but the second one usually doesn't feel the same as the first one.



To conclude you should study new vocabulary about **household items**.

When someone set the table or lay the table he or she puts the glasses, cups, plates, and cutlery on the kitchen table or the dining table. Tableware includes all the articles used to set the table: the cutlery, the glassware and the crockery.

After having breakfast, lunch or dinner, we have to clear the table and do the dishes. We can use a dishwasher or wash the dishes in the sink.

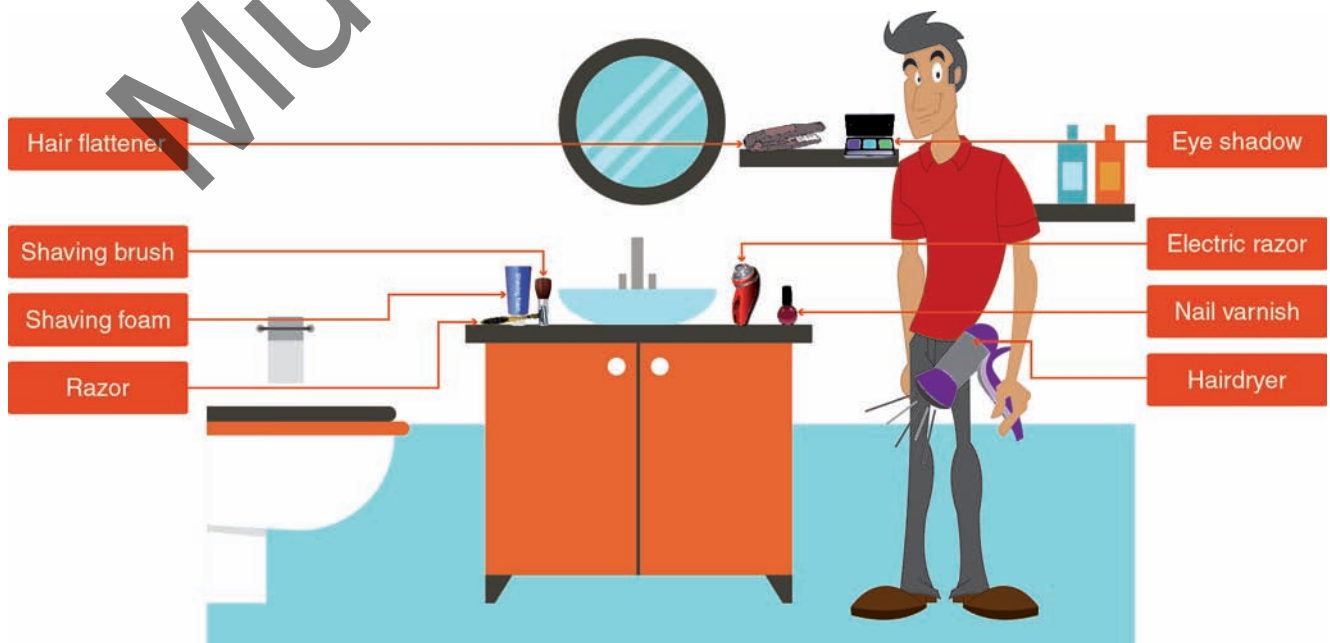
Vocabulary

Following Oxford Dictionaries, silverware includes «dishes, containers, or cutlery made of or coated with silver, or made of a material resembling silver».



We have our personal hygiene products in the bathroom: soaps, toothbrushes, toothpaste, cosmetics, creams, combs, sponges, etc. In the bathroom have a bath or a shower; in AmE people say «take a bath» or «take a shower». It is important that our daily shower be a pleasure moment. We use soap or shower gel for cleaning our body and shampoo for our hair.

After having a bath or a shower we dry our wet skin with a towel. Some people prefer a bathrobe and the majority of people use slippers as footwear.



?? Did you know...?

Using mnemonics or memory aids is also a good and effective method of memorization. There are some websites that suggest this technique. You can find some examples of this method in Mnemonic Dictionary (mnemonicdictionary.com/)

🔍 Check it out!

You can visit these websites in order to learn and practice new vocabulary: bit.ly/1FWHAcS and nyti.ms/1EoK538.



It seems clear that disjointed single-word lists memorization is not a good **method**. It is recommended to avoid it. So, in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) to recall new words they should have been studied as being part of a semantic field, for example, the semantic field of the body or personal hygiene items.

Students should **use the new words** immediately, writing or speaking. Once a new word has been used twenty times at least, a person will be able to recall it in the future.

The students have also to take into account that tone, diction or the election of certain words and expressions in different situations may affect their meaning. These words or expressions can be formal, informal, or even colloquial or slang. Therefore, apart from learning the meaning of the words it is necessary to know how to use them in the right and appropriate contexts.

The election of the style depends on the following three factors: the context and the circumstances, the purpose of the message and the receptor of the message (known, unknown, status, age, etc.).

Once these factors have been analysed, the most appropriate style will be chosen:

- **Formal or solemn style** the receptor uses to be unknown or there is certain distance from the speaker to the receptor, and the purpose of the message usually implies a serious issue.
- **Informal style** it is used in friendly contexts where the receptors are well-known persons and the messages to be transmitted use to be casual topics. Even dealing with serious topics the proximity with the receptor allows to use an informal style.
- **Slang or colloquial expressions** are commonly expressed in informal communications, both in speech and writing. Speakers use this kind of expressions when they are especially relaxed and not self-conscious.

Formal	Informal	Slang
To be angry	To be mad	To be pissed off (slightly vulgar)
To be happy	To be over the moon	To be thrilled to bits
To feel down	To feel down in the dumps	To be sad-assed
To be beside oneself with anger	To go ballistic/nuclear	To go bananas
To be really tired	To be pooped	To be knackered
To be silly	To be a bit slow on the uptake	To have shit for brains
To be mean	To be tight-fisted	To be a stingy
To leave/To go away	To get moving/To get going/To beat it/To take off (AmE)	To shove off/To piss off
My father	My dad	My old man
We'll keep in touch	See you later	Later, dude
That's all right	Cool!	No worries!
May I help you?	Can I help you?	Need a hand?
I haven't seen you for a long time	Long time no see	
Stay/Remain	Stick around/Hang around	

Informal language generally uses:

- Short common vocabulary: like, big, things, stuff, a lot, etc.
- Phrasal verbs: turn up, turn down, turn on, turn off, etc.
- Contractions: don't, can't, won't, isn't, aren't, etc.
- Abbreviated words: photo, TV, etc.

- Relaxed grammar, with shortenings and omissions: «Ye gotta eat» instead of «You have to eat», «Do you wanna eat?» instead of «Do you want to eat?» or «I gonna eat» instead of «I am going to eat».
- Colloquial and slang word and phrases.

In professional or academic writing, for example, colloquial expressions and clichés must be avoided.

Some examples are: «It's raining cats and dogs», used to refer that it is raining heavily; «Bite your tongue» is used to ask someone not to speak about something; «Eye for an eye», it conveys the idea of revenge; «Tongue-in-cheek», which means that something is said jokingly; or «The third time is the charm», this expression is used when someone expects the success of something after two failed attempts.

Similarly, slang words never should be used in academic and professional contexts since this kind of words is not considered Standard English.

As a general rule, the style used in **writing** is more formal than in speaking, but within written texts there are solemn text and less formal ones. For instance, the style used when writing a letter to a friend is less formal than the style used in a written legal document.

In **speaking** the style also varies depending on the speaker, the interlocutors and the circumstances surrounding them. Obviously when someone talks to a friend the style used is less formal than when that person addresses to a teacher at school or to a judge in a trial.

In very formal contexts, less formal and colloquial expressions should be substituted by the formal words or phrases.

Formal	Less formal
Acceptable	All right
Apologize/Apologise	Say sorry
As soon as possible	ASAP
Authorize/Authorise	Give the go ahead
Call	Ring up
Children	Kids
Commence	Start
Contact	Get in touch with
Decrease	Go down
Definitely	Really
Discover	Find out
However	But
In conclusion	To sum up
Increase	Go up
Indicate	Point out
Inexpensive	Cheap
Much/Many	Lot of/A lot of
Nevertheless/Notwithstanding	Anyway
Obtain	Get
Oppose	Go against
Postpone	Put off
Release	Free
Tolerate	Put up with

?? Did you know...?

Shortenings and omissions are common in songs, like this one by Franz Ferdinand: bit.ly/15GpObp.



Vocabulary

Clichés are words and expressions which have been overused so that they have lost their initial alleged strength.





On a general basis, contractions and phrasal verbs are most commonly used in written informal and colloquial texts, when the style imitates a normal conversation, but they are not used in more formal writings. For instance, a professional who contacts a distribution company should begin his/her e-mail by writing: «I am writing to inform you...» instead of «I'm writing...».

Legal or technical documents are particularly written in a very formal style.

The contract will start in November.

Attached herein is a copy of the aforementioned document...

I should be very obliged if...

The distinction between formal and informal style is especially clear when writing letters or e-mails. When someone writes a letter or an e-mail to a friend or to a person with whom he or she has a close relationship, the style used is less formal. Therefore, the initial greeting and the closure are different from the formulae used in formal letters.

Informal letter	Formal letter
Initial greeting	Initial greeting
Dear Tom Hello	Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms Adams (with known receptors) Dear Sir/Madam (with unknown receptors)
Closure	Closure
Kind regards Lots of love Much love Regards With best wishes With kindest regards With love from...	Yours faithfully (with unknown receptors) Yours sincerely (with known receptors)



In conversations there are also different styles depending on the context. The following table shows some formal and informal expressions in different situations:

	Formal	Less formal
Greetings	Hello! Good morning/afternoon/evening! How are you?	Hi! How's a thing? How are things going?
Answer to greetings	Very well, thank you, and you?	Fine, thanks Great! So, so
Check understanding	Have I made that clear? Have you figure it out?	Got it? Are you with me? Are you following?
Show understanding	I see/understand That's clear	I get it
Show you don't understand	What do you mean? I can't follow you I'm not sure I get what you mean Let me check if I heard you correctly	I don't get you I'm not following you What was that?
Introduce good news	We regret to... I'm sorry but... I'm afraid it won't ... Unfortunately...	I hate to tell you I feel sorry but...
Express condolence	I was very sorry to hear... I'd like to express my bereavement... Our condolence over...	I am sad to learn that...
Express something sure	Definitely/Doubtlessly Without any question... There is no question that...	Surely Certainly
Express something probable	Seemingly/Apparently... On the face of it...	Probably/Actually/Really It seems that...
Generalize	All things considered... Broadly speaking...	In general By and large
Convince for	I like to reassure you... You have my personal guarantee...	I assure you that... There is no doubt ...
Convince against	There's no guarantee... I'm not convinced	I am not sure It's not a good idea I'm against
Say thanks	That's very kind of you I'm thankful/grateful for... I appreciate your interest	Thank you very much Thank you Thanks
Replies to thanks	Don't mention it It was a pleasure I'm glad you enjoyed	That's okay You're welcome (most used in AmE)
Thank people for coming	It's been a pleasure to speak to you I've been delighted to meet to you	Thank you for coming I've enjoyed your company today
Offer	Would you like some coffee? Would you care for some tea?	How about a cup of coffee? Can I bring you something?
Invite someone	Would you like to...? I'd like to invite you to... We'd be delighted to have you...	Do you want ...? How about...? Why don't we...?
Accept an invitation	That would be wonderful That sounds perfect It's so nice	Sounds good Good idea Great
Decline an invitation	Thanks for asking but... I don't think I'd be able...	No can do I'd rather not Can't make it
Thank after an invitation	Thanks for your hospitality What a pleasure	I enjoyed/loved
Apologies	Please accept my apologies I would like to apologize you for ...	I'm sorry, but... I'm really sorry about that Sorry
Replies to apologies	That's all right Don't worry about it	Never mind
Farewell	Goodbye! Good night! See you tomorrow/on Monday	Bye!

?? Did you know...?

«Thanks a lot!» is sarcastic. You can use this expression in an informal context, for example, when you say to a friend «You ate all my cake! Thanks a lot!».



When somebody gives you information or when you buy something, you are expected to say «**Thank you**» or «Thanks». Some people even could feel offended if the other person does not say it. Usually people do not need to say anything as a reply, although some people may say some expressions like the following.

That's all right.

That's okay.

Don't mention it.

In AmE they may say «You are welcome».

Besides, people may say «Thank you» or «Yes, please» when they want to accept something.

—Have a coffee?

—Thank you/Thanks/Yes, please.

They say «No, thank you» or «No, thanks» to refuse something.

—Would you like some more coffee?

—No, thank you/No, thanks!

People say «**Please**» when they want to ask for something. In BrE it introduces or ends this kind of requests but in AmE it may appear always at the beginning of a request.

Please, could I get into the car? (BrE and AmE)

Could I get into the car, please? (BrE)

English speakers very often **apologize**: not only when they do something wrongly but also when they communicate bad news or something not good. In the latter cases, «sorry» doesn't mean apology but regret.

I'm sorry you couldn't come yesterday.

People say «Excuse me» when they want to go past somebody. It is also used when someone wants to attract attention of someone else whom he or she doesn't know.

Excuse me, could you tell me the way to the nearest bank?

Excuse me, sir. Is this seat vacant?

«Sorry» or «I'm sorry» are used in BrE for apologies: Sorry, I'm late; I'm sorry, but would you mind if you wait outside? The last sentence implies that the speaker is apologizing in advance for any inconvenience. «I beg your pardon» is more formal: I beg your pardon, I should call you early. In AmE, both «Pardon me» and «Excuse me» are used for apologies: Excuse me/Pardon me, I couldn't phone you before.

In BrE people also say «Pardon?» or «Sorry?» when they did not hear and they need to ask for something to be repeated: Pardon, could you say that again?. In AmE you say «Pardon me?» or «Excuse me?» instead: Excuse me, what was that? Saying «What?» is not polite.



When someone passes someone else in the street, the first one usually says: «Excuse me»

Common vocabulary and expressions in colloquial English 1.2.2.

In every language, there are some words that people use in a **colloquial way**. These expressions are very common among young people and talking with friends, colleagues or relatives. However, we must be careful because this vocabulary and expressions can offend people or may be considered inappropriate by someone else.

Some words and expressions very frequently used in colloquial English are those used **to speak about someone**. English people may call a young man «lad boy»: I have spoken with the lad boy of 5th floor, he's nice! «Ace» is used in AmE refer to someone being the best at something: He is an ace football player. This word is also used as a colloquial word referred to a foolish person: Look, ace, you can't cook a cake with salt rather sugar, because it isn't tasty. When someone talks about famous people, usually use «celeb»; this word refers to a celebrity.



«Guy» mainly refers to a man, but in modern English it may be also used with reference to a woman. This word is used in very informal situations: Hey, guys, let's go! «Rare bird» refers to an unusual person or a person with rare talents or abilities: She is a rare bird who enjoys classical music and can't understand modern one. «Babe», for example Peter's girlfriend is such a babe, implies that that girl is very attractive. «Sub» is the short for substitute: I was a sub teacher for two months.

Other terms used to address a male are: mate, old boy, bud, pal, mister, bo, baby, babe, boss, bub, doc, buddy, chief.

OK, boss, how are you doing?

What's up doc?

Stop over there, will you, old man?

Keep the change, bo.

Vocabulary

The word «boss» has its origin in Dutch *baas*, meaning «master».

In colloquial English there may be **several words to refer to the same concept** or idea. Some examples are the following.

- To refer to a fat person: fatty, jelly-belly, etc.
- To refer to a thin person: beanpole, weed, streak, etc.
- To refer to pregnancy: to be in the family way, to be expecting, to be in pod, etc.

Family is a topic which can be referred to by saying many colloquial words. To designate relations or members of a family in colloquial situations we can say «folks», «tribe» or «clan». To refer to a brother people sometimes use «bro», to refer to a sister, «sis». «Auntie» or «aunty» are two usual forms to refer to an aunt. In colloquial situations and contexts people use different terms when they speak about parents. To refer to a father: dad, dada, daddy, pappy, pa, pop, poppa, etc. To refer to a mother: mam, mammy, mummy, mum, mumsy, mums, ma, mamma, mom, mommy, old girl, old woman, old lady, etc. Other colloquial words are the following:

- To refer to a spouse: better half.
- To refer to a husband: hubby, old man, papa, pot and pan, monkey man.
- To refer to wife: old woman, missus, missis, duchess, Mrs.
- To refer to a former spouse or lover: ex

Some words or expressions commonly used when speaking with **children** are: «bellyache» (it means «stomach ache»): Mum, I have a bellyache. «Boo-boo» means an error: I made a small boo-boo. Little children use «Bow-wow» to refer to a dog. «See you later, alligator» means goodbye, it is answered by «After a while crocodile».

There are also slang words to talk about **money**: «tenner» means £10, «fiver» means £5 and «quid» means £1. «Cabbage» means money: I haven't enough cabbage to buy that dress.

Other colloquial **expressions** are the following: «To be amped», for instance «I'm amped!» meaning that the speaker can't wait for something to happen. The expression «It's monkeys outside» means «It's very cold». «To lose the plot» means to go crazy or mentally unstable.

«To give someone a bell», for instance «I'll give you a bell», means «I'll call you». In the same way, «give someone a buzz» means to give someone a telephone call: Give me a buzz tomorrow morning.

To thank, English people used to say «Thank you» or simply «Thanks» which is more usual in informal contexts. Another very colloquial expression is «Thanks a buch», but the meaning is different because it has an ironic tone.



«Give me five!» and «Give me some skin!» mean «Shake my hand!», that is, a request for some form of touching in greeting

Mueseskoanalita

?? Did you know...?

People say «cheese» when someone takes a photography of them. Note that your mouth smiles when you say that word.



Colloquial word	Meaning
Ginger	Red-haired person
Head	Headache
Sec	Second
Show biz	Show business
Silks	Clothing
Specs	Eyeglasses, spectacles
Telly	Television
To trash	To throw away
To wheel	To drive
Up	Happy
Veg	Vegetable
Vid	Video
Widow-maker	Extremely dangerous

A toast is a kind of congratulation in which a drink, usually an alcoholic drink, is taken to honour or congratulate a person, to whom someone proposes a toast. To make a toast people usually say the following expressions.