

Michael Swan
Catherine Walter

how
ENGLISH
works

A GRAMMAR PRACTICE BOOK

WITH ANSWERS

OXFORD

How English Works

A grammar practice book

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Michael Swan & Catherine Walter

With answers

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Contents

Introduction	1
Test yourself	3
Test yourself: answers	11
Explanations and exercises: list of sections	12
Phonetic alphabet	15
Explanations and exercises	17
Answers to exercises	303
Index	351

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Introduction

The purpose of the book

How English Works is for learners of English who want to speak and write more correctly. It contains:

- short clear explanations of the rules of English grammar
- examples of correct use
- exercises.

How to use the book

If you are studying with a teacher, he or she will help you to use the book effectively. If you are studying at home, the following suggestions may be useful:

- Don't go through the whole book from beginning to end. *How English Works* contains explanations of basic rules (e.g. how to make questions), intermediate points (e.g. the use of passives) and more advanced problems (e.g. difficult structures with *who*, *whom* and *which*). Different learners will need to study different parts of the book.
- Start by trying the tests on pages 4–9. These will help you to decide what you need to learn – what are the most important problems in English grammar *for you*.
- Use the list of sections (at the beginning) and the Index (at the end) to help you find the sections that you want. Read the explanations and do the exercises. If you still have problems with a point, work through the section again.
- You will sometimes need to know some of the words that we use when we talk about grammar in English (e.g. *verb*, *preposition*, *tense*, *plural*, *countable*). These words are explained on pages 298–302.

The explanations

We have tried to make these as clear and simple as possible. You can find more complete explanations of some points in Michael Swan's book *Practical English Usage* (Oxford University Press).

Sometimes we ask you to try to work out a rule for yourself. When you have tried these 'Do It Yourself' activities, you can look at the blue pages (303–305) at the back of the book to see if you were right.

The exercises

Most of the exercises are simple in structure. More difficult exercises are marked with the sign ▲

A few exercises are designed for group work in class.

What kind of English does the book teach?

We teach the grammar of everyday spoken and written British English. We have used the British National Corpus – a collection of 100 million words of modern spoken and written English – to help us make sure that our rules and examples give a true picture of the present-day language.

For information about differences between British and American English, see *Practical English Usage*.

How important is grammar?

Grammar is not the most important thing in the world, but if you make a lot of mistakes you may be more difficult to understand, and some kinds of people may look down on you or not take you seriously. Hardly anybody speaks or writes a foreign language perfectly, but you will communicate more successfully if you can make your English reasonably correct. We hope this book will help.

Test yourself

These tests will help you to decide what you need to learn. First of all, try the 'basic points' test on pages 4–5 and check your answers on page 11. If you have problems with any of the points, go to the sections where these are explained and do the exercises; then try the test again. The tests on pages 6–9 are suitable for intermediate and advanced students, and can be done in the same way.

Test yourself: basic points

Here are some of the basic grammar points from *How English Works*. Do you know them all? Check your answers on page 11.

Choose the correct answer(s). One or more answers may be correct.

- 1 She's ... university teacher.
A a B an C the D one
- 2 I like ... small animals.
A the B — (= *nothing*) C every D all
- 3 Is this coat ... ?
A yours B your C the yours
- 4 Is Diana ... ?
A a friend of yours B a your friend C your friend
- 5 Who are ... people over there?
A that B the C these D those
- 6 ... is your phone number?
A Which B What C How
- 7 Could I have ... drink?
A other B an other C another
- 8 There aren't ... for everybody.
A chairs enough B enough chairs C enough of chairs
- 9 They're ... young to get married.
A too much B too C very too
- 10 Most ... like travelling.
A of people B of the people C people
- 11 Ann and Peter phone ... every day.
A them B *themselves* C themselves D each other
- 12 It's ... weather.
A terrible B a terrible C the terrible
- 13 *The plural of car is cars. Which of these are correct plurals?*
A journeys B *ladys* C *minuts* D sandwiches E babies
- 14 *Which of these is/are correct?*
A happier B more happier C unhappier D beautifuller
- 15 This is ... winter for 20 years.
A the more bad B worse C the worse D worst
E the worst

- 16 She's much taller ... me.
A than B as C that
- 17 He lives in the same street ... me.
A that B like C as D than
- 18 Her eyes ... a very light blue.
A are B have C has
- 19 ... help me?
A Can you to B Do you can C Can you
- 20 You ... worry about it.
A not must B don't must C must not D mustn't
- 21 It ... again. It ... all the time here in the winter.
A 's raining, 's raining B rains, rains
C rains, 's raining D 's raining, rains
- 22 I ... she ... you.
A think, likes B am thinking, is liking
C think, is liking D am thinking, likes
- 23 Who ... the window?
A open B opened C did opened
- 24 Why ... ?
A those men are laughing
B are laughing those men
C are those men laughing
- 25 What ... ?
A does she want B does she wants C she wants
- 26 I didn't ... he was at home.
A to think B think C thinking D thought
- 27 ... a hole in my sock.
A There's B There is C It's D It is E Is
- 28 I'll see you ... Tuesday afternoon.
A at B on C in
- 29 What time did you arrive ... the station?
A at B to C —
- 30 We're going ... the opera tomorrow night.
A at B — C in D to

Test yourself: intermediate points

Here are some of the intermediate grammar points from *How English Works*. Do you know them all? Check your answers on page 11.

Choose the correct answer(s). One or more answers may be correct.

- 31 I went out without ... money.
A some B any
- 32 He's got ... money.
A much B many C a lot of D lots of
- 33 'Who's there?' '...'
A It's me B It is I C Me D I
- 34 Although he felt very he smiled
A angrily, friendly B angry, friendly C angry, in a friendly way
- 35 I ... to America.
A have often been B often have been C have been often
- 36 My mother ... my birthday.
A always forgets B always is forgetting C forgets always
- 37 You look ... a teacher.
A like B as C the same like
- 38 How many brothers and sisters ... ?
A have you got B do you have C are you having
- 39 Good! I ... work tomorrow.
A mustn't B don't have to C haven't got to
- 40 I ... smoke.
A — (= *nothing*) B use to C used to
- 41 Andrew ... to see us this evening.
A will come B comes C is coming
- 42 Alice ... have a baby.
A will B shall C is going to
- 43 I knew that he ... waiting for somebody.
A is B was C would
- 44 ... Gloria last week?
A Have you seen B Did you see C Were you seeing
- 45 She's an old friend — I ... her ... years.
A 've known, for B know, for C 've known, since
D know, since

- 46 We met when we ... in France.
A studied B were studying C had studied
- 47 As soon as she came in I knew I ... her before.
A have seen B saw C had seen
- 48 This picture ... by a friend of my mother's.
A is painting B is painted C was painting D was painted
- 49 Can you ... ?
A make me some tea B make some tea for me
C make for me some tea
- 50 Try ... be late.
A not to B to not
- 51 I went to London ... clothes.
A for buy B for to buy C for buying D to buy
- 52 You can't live very long without
A to eat B eat C eating D you eat
- 53 I enjoy ... , but I wouldn't like ... it all my life.
A to teach, to do B teaching, doing C to teach, doing
D teaching, to do
- 54 Her parents don't want ... married.
A her to get B her get C that she get D that she gets
- 55 I'm not sure what ...
A do they want? B do they want. C they want.
- 56 The policeman ... me not to park there.
A asked B said C told D advised
- 57 I ... you if you ... that again.
A hit, say B 'll hit, 'll say C hit, 'll say D 'll hit, say
- 58 It would be nice if we ... a bit more room.
A would have B had C have
- 59 If you ... me, I ... in real trouble last year.
A didn't help, would have been
B hadn't helped, would have been
C hadn't helped, would be
D didn't help, would be
- 60 There's the man ... took your coat.
A which B who C that D —

Test yourself: advanced points

Here are some of the more advanced grammar points from *How English Works*. Do you know them all? Check your answers on page 11.

Choose the correct answer(s). One or more answers may be correct.

- 61 My family ... thinking of moving to Birmingham.
A is B are
- 62 We watched a ... on TV last night.
A war film B war's film C film of war
- 63 He was wearing ... riding boots.
A red old Spanish leather B old leather red Spanish
C old red Spanish leather D Spanish red old leather
- 64 ... he gets, ...
A The richer, the more friends he has
B Richer, more he has friends
C Richer, more friends he has
D The richer, the more he has friends
- 65 It's ... if you take the train.
A quicker B the quicker C quickest D the quickest
- 66 He ... very annoying.
A 's B 's being
- 67 That ... be Roger at the door – it's too early.
A can't B mustn't C couldn't
- 68 At last, after three days, they ... get to the top of the mountain.
A could B managed to C succeeded to D were able to
- 69 It was crazy to drive like that. You ... killed somebody.
A may have B might have C could have D can have
- 70 I wonder if John ... this evening.
A will phone B phones
- 71 Who ... you that ring?
A 's given B gave
- 72 He ... quite different since he ... married.
A is, has got B has been, has got C is, got D has been, got
- 73 This is the first time I ... a sports car.
A 've driven B 'm driving C drive
- 74 On her birthday ...
A she was given a new car B a new car was given to her
- 75 We can't use the sports hall yet because it ...
A is still built B is still building C is still being built

- 76 I look forward ... you soon.
A seeing B to seeing C to see
- 77 If you have trouble going to sleep, try ... a glass of milk before bedtime.
A drinking B to drink C drink
- 78 This is my friend Joe. I ... met, have you?
A don't think you've B think you haven't
- 79 How ... !
A he works hard B hard he works
- 80 Which of these sentences are correct in spoken English?
A Car's running badly. B Seen Peter?
C Can't come in here, sorry. D Careful what you say.
E Lost my glasses. F Have heard of her.
- 81 Nobody phoned, did ... ?
A he B she C they D it E he or she F anybody
- 82 If you were ever in trouble, I would give you all the help you
A will need B would need C need D needed
- 83 My wife will be upset
A if I don't get back tomorrow B unless I get back tomorrow
- 84 Tell me at once ... Margaret arrives.
A if B when C in case
- 85 It's time you ... home, but I'd rather you ... here.
A go, stay B went, stayed C go, stayed D went, stay
- 86 I wish I ... more time.
A had B have C would have D will have
- 87 John Hastings, ... , has just come to live in our street.
A that I was at school with B I was at school with
C with who I was at school D with whom I was at school
- 88 She keeps tapping her fingers, ... gets on my nerves.
A which B what C that which
- 89 Can you finish the job ... Friday?
A till B until C by D for
- 90 There's a supermarket ... our house.
A in front of B opposite C facing

Test yourself: answers

basic points

	<i>see page</i>
1 A	18
2 B, D	22
3 A	28
4 A, C	28
5 B, D	30
6 B	31
7 C	43
8 B	44
9 B	44
10 C	47
11 D	51
12 A	56
13 A, B	58
14 A, C	79
15 E	80
16 A	87
17 C	88
18 A	95
19 C	106
20 C, D	106
21 D	142
22 A	148
23 B	210
24 C	210
25 A	210
26 B	213
27 A, B	222
28 B	284
29 A	284
30 D	285

intermediate points

	<i>see page</i>
31 B	32
32 C, D	40
33 A, C	48
34 C	68, 70
35 A	74
36 A	74
37 A	90
38 A, B	102
39 B, C	113
40 A, C	128
41 A, C	130, 134
42 C	132-3
43 B	141
44 B	154
45 A	156
46 B	164
47 C	166
48 D	176
49 A, B	183
50 A	188
51 D	192
52 C	196
53 D	199, 204
54 A	202
55 C	251
56 A, C, D	252
57 D	256
58 B	258
59 B	262
60 B, C	270

advanced points

	<i>see page</i>
61 A, B	60
62 A	63
63 C	73
64 A	84
65 A, C	86
66 A, B	94
67 A, C	108
68 B, D	114
69 B, C	122
70 A	137
71 B	153
72 C, D	162
73 A	170
74 A	180
75 C	181
76 B	198
77 A	205
78 A	217
79 B	221
80 A, B, C, D, E	224
81 C	227
82 D	245
83 A	264
84 A, B	265
85 B	267
86 A	269
87 D	276
88 A	277
89 C, D	286
90 B, C	287

Explanations and exercises:

list of sections

(Note: for explanations of the words that we use for talking about grammar, see pages 298–302.)

determiners: articles, possessives and demonstratives

- 17 **a and an**
- 17 **a/an and one**
- 18 **a/an: main uses**
- 20 **a/an in descriptions**
- 21 **the = 'you know which one(s)'**
- 22 **generalisations without the**
- 24 **the and no article: special cases**
- 26 **articles: revision**
- 28 **possessives (my and mine etc)**
- 30 **this and that**

other determiners

- 31 **which? and what?**
- 32 **some and any**
- 34 **some/any and no article**
- 35 **no = 'not a/any'**
- 36 **any = 'it doesn't matter which'**
- 37 **some, any and no: revision**
- 38 **all, everybody and everything**
- 39 **whole and all**
- 40 **much, many, a lot (of), little, few**
- 42 **less and least, fewer and fewest**
- 43 **other(s) and another**
- 44 **enough, too and too much**
- 46 **of with determiners**

pronouns and nouns

- 48 **personal pronouns: I and me etc**
- 50 **reflexive pronouns (myself etc)**
- 52 **you, one and they**
- 54 **one(s)**
- 55 **pronouns and possessives: revision**
- 56 **countable and uncountable nouns**

- 57 **uncountable nouns: special cases**
- 58 **plurals of nouns: spelling**
- 59 **plurals of nouns: special cases**
- 60 **mixed singular and plural**
- 62 **possessive 's**
- 63 **noun + noun**
- 64 **noun + noun or preposition structure**
- 65 **noun + noun and possessive 's**
- 66 **possessive 's or the of structure**

adjectives and adverbs

- 68 **adjectives and adverbs**
- 70 **confusing adjectives and adverbs**
- 71 **and with adjectives**
- 72 **adjectives without nouns**
- 73 **adjectives: order before nouns**
- 74 **word order: adverbs with the verb**
- 76 **focusing adverbs: even and only**
- 77 **adverbs at the end of a sentence**
- 78 **still, yet and already**

comparison, degree

- 79 **comparatives and superlatives**
- 80 **irregular comparison**
- 81 **comparative and superlative adverbs**
- 82 **much etc with comparatives**
- 83 **comparative or superlative?**
- 84 **comparatives: other points**
- 86 **superlatives: other points**
- 87 **than, as and that**
- 88 **as ... as**
- 90 **like and as**
- 91 **so and such**
- 92 **very and too**
- 93 **very (much) with past participles**

be, do and have

- 94 **be**: progressive forms; **do be**
- 95 **be**: age, colour etc
- 96 **do**: emphatic auxiliary
- 98 **do and make**
- 100 **have**: actions
- 102 **have (got)**: possession etc
- 104 **have**: habitual and repeated actions
- 105 **have + object + verb form**

modal auxiliary verbs

- 106 **modal auxiliary verbs**: basic rules
- 108 **must, can, may, might**: how certain?
- 110 **must, should** etc: obligation
- 112 **must and have (got) to**: obligation
- 113 **must not, do not have to** etc
- 114 **can** (ability): special problems
- 116 **can, could, may**: permission etc
- 118 **will**: willingness etc
- 120 **will and would**: typical behaviour
- 121 **shall** in questions
- 122 **should have, could have** etc
- 124 revision of **modal verbs**
- 126 **need**
- 127 **had better**
- 128 **used to ...**
- 129 **supposed to**

tenses: future

- 130 **future: will** (and shall)
- 132 **future: going to**
- 134 **future**: present progressive
- 135 **future**: comparison of structures
- 136 **future**: simple present
- 137 **future**: tenses after **if** and **when**
- 138 **future progressive**
- 139 **future perfect**
- 140 **future: I am to ...**
- 141 **future** in the past

tenses: present

- 142 the two **present tenses**
- 144 **present tense** stories etc
- 146 **present progressive** for changes
- 147 **simple present**: spelling

- 148 **non-progressive verbs**
- 149 **he's always borrowing money** etc
- 150 revision of **present tenses**

tenses: perfect and past

- 151 **simple present perfect**: introduction
- 152 **present perfect and past**: news
- 154 **present perfect and past**: time words
- 156 **present perfect**: situations 'up to now'
- 158 **present perfect progressive**
- 160 **present perfect progressive or simple?**
- 161 **since and for**
- 162 tenses with **since** and **for**
- 163 **present perfect and past**: revision
- 164 **past progressive**
- 166 **past perfect**
- 168 **past perfect progressive**
- 170 **perfect tenses with this is the first** etc
- 171 **past and progressive in requests** etc
- 172 revision of **past and perfect tenses**

passives

- 176 **passive** structures
- 178 reasons for using **passives**
- 180 **passives**: verbs with two objects
- 181 **passives**: progressive, perfect etc
- 182 **passives**: complex structures

structures after verbs, adjectives and nouns

- 183 **verbs with two objects**
- 184 **verbs with prepositions and particles**
- 186 structures with **get**
- 188 **infinitives**
- 189 **perfect infinitives (to have gone** etc)
- 190 **infinitive with and without to**
- 191 **I don't want to** etc
- 192 **infinitive of purpose**
- 193 **interested and interesting** etc
- 194 **-ing forms as subjects, objects** etc
- 196 **preposition + -ing**
- 197 **preposition + -ing**: special cases
- 198 **to ...ing**
- 199 **verb + infinitive or -ing form**
- 200 **go ...ing**

- 201 **need ...ing**
- 202 **verb + object + infinitive**
- 204 **-ing form and infinitive both possible**
- 206 **adjective + infinitive or -ing form**
- 207 **noun + infinitive or -ing form**
- 208 **for ... to ... after adjective/noun**

basic sentence-structures

- 210 **questions**
- 212 **what ... like, what time, what sort etc**
- 213 **negative structures**
- 214 **negative questions**
- 216 **not and no**
- 217 **negatives: I don't think etc**
- 218 **imperatives**
- 220 **let's**
- 221 **exclamations**
- 222 **there is**
- 224 **dropping sentence-beginnings**
- 225 **dropping words after auxiliaries**
- 226 **question tags: basic rules**
- 227 **question tags: advanced points**
- 228 **short answers and attention signals**
- 229 **I (don't) think so etc**
- 230 **so am I etc**
- 232 **it: preparatory subject and object**
- 234 **emphasis with it, what etc**

conjunctions

- 236 **conjunctions**
- 237 **conjunctions and clauses: position**
- 238 **using conjunctions**
- 240 **conjunctions with -ing forms**
- 241 **-ing clauses without conjunctions**
- 242 **both ... and; neither ... nor**
- 243 **leaving out that**
- 244 **tenses after conjunctions**

Indirect speech

- 246 **indirect speech: why things change**
- 247 **indirect speech: 'here' and 'now'**
- 248 **indirect speech: tenses**
- 250 **indirect speech: present situations**
- 251 **indirect speech: questions**

- 252 **indirect speech: infinitives**
- 253 **tell and say**
- 254 **indirect speech: special cases**
- 255 **revision of indirect speech**

structures with *if, unless, in case* etc

- 256 **if: ordinary tense-use**
- 258 **if: special tense-use**
- 260 **if I go and if I went: the difference**
- 261 **if I were**
- 262 **if: unreal past situations**
- 264 **unless**
- 265 **in case**
- 266 **it's time, would rather: structures**
- 268 **wish, if only: structures**

relative clauses

- 270 **relative who, which and that**
- 272 **leaving out relative pronouns**
- 274 **what = 'the thing that' etc**
- 275 **relative whose**
- 276 **non-identifying relative clauses**
- 278 **reduced relative clauses**
- 229 **relatives: revision**
- 280 **reading relative clauses**
- 282 **whoever, no matter who etc**

prepositions

- 284 **prepositions with verbs, nouns etc**
- 285 **at/in and to**
- 286 **by and until**
- 287 **for and during**
- 287 **opposite and in front of**
- 288 **between and among**
- 289 **prepositions at the end of questions**
- 290 **prepositions in relative clauses**
- 292 **prepositions in passive clauses**
- 293 **preposition after adjective + infinitive**

miscellaneous

- 294 **numbers**
- 296 **contractions**
- 298 **grammar: useful words**

Phonetic alphabet

It is necessary to use a special alphabet to show the pronunciation of English words, because the ordinary English alphabet does not have enough letters to represent all the sounds of the language. The following list contains all the letters of the phonetic alphabet used in this book, with examples of the words in which the sounds that they refer to are found.

Vowels and diphthongs (double vowels)

i:	seat /si:t/, feel /fi:l/	eɪ	take /teɪk/, wait /weɪt/
ɪ	sit /sɪt/, in /ɪn/	aɪ	mine /maɪn/, light /laɪt/
e	set /set/, any /'eni:/	ɔɪ	oil /ɔɪl/, boy /bɔɪ/
æ	sat /sæt/, match /mætʃ/	əʊ	no /nəʊ/, open /'əʊpən/
ɑ:	march /mɑ:tʃ/, after /'ɑ:ftə(r)/	aʊ	house /haʊs/, now /naʊ/
ɒ	pot /pɒt/, gone /gɒn/	ɪə	hear /hɪə(r)/, deer /dɪə(r)/
ɔ:	port /pɔ:t/, law /lɔ:/	eə	air /eə(r)/, where /weə(r)/
ʊ	good /gʊd/, could /kʊd/	ʊə	tour /tuə(r)/, endure /ɪn'dʒʊə(r)/
u:	food /fu:d/, group /gru:p/		
ʌ	much /mʌtʃ/, front /frʌnt/		
ɜ:	turn /tɜ:n/, word /wɜ:d/		
ə	away /ə'weɪ/, collect /kə'lekt/, until /ən'tɪl/		

Consonants

p	pull /pʊl/, cup /kʌp/	tʃ	cheap /tʃi:p/, catch /kætʃ/
b	bull /bʊl/, rob /rɒb/	dʒ	jail /dʒeɪl/, bridge /brɪdʒ/
f	ferry /'feri:/, life /laɪf/	k	case /keɪs/, take /teɪk/
v	very /'veri:/, live /lɪv/	g	go /gəʊ/, rug /rʌg/
θ	think /θɪŋk/, bath /bɑ:θ/	m	my /maɪ/, come /kʌm/
ð	then /ðen/, with /wɪð/	n	no /nəʊ/, on /ɒn/
t	take /teɪk/, set /set/	ŋ	sing /sɪŋ/, finger /'fɪŋgə(r)/
d	day /deɪ/, red /red/	l	love /lʌv/, hole /həʊl/
s	sing /sɪŋ/, rice /raɪs/	r	round /raʊnd/, carry /'kæri:/
z	zoo /zu:/, days /deɪz/	w	well /weɪl/
ʃ	show /ʃəʊ/, wish /wɪʃ/	j	young /jʌŋ/
ʒ	pleasure /'pleɪʒə(r)/, occasion /ə'keɪʒn/	h	house /haʊs/

The sign (ˈ) shows stress.

a and an

We use **a** before a consonant and **an** before a vowel.

But it depends on the **pronunciation** of the following word, not the spelling.

a dog *a hat* *a one-pound coin* (/ə wʌn...f) *a union* (/ə 'ju:niən/)
an orange *an uncle* *an hour* (/ən aʊə/) *an MP* (/ən em 'pi:f)

1 A or an?

- | | | |
|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1 ___ elephant | 7 ___ half-hour lesson | 13 ___ hand |
| 2 ___ university | 8 ___ one-hour lesson | 14 ___ underpass |
| 3 ___ umbrella | 9 ___ useful book | 15 ___ unit |
| 4 ___ ticket | 10 ___ SOS | 16 ___ CD |
| 5 ___ VIP | 11 ___ X-ray | 17 ___ exam |
| 6 ___ honest man | 12 ___ European | 18 ___ school |

a/an and one

We use **one**, not **a/an**:

- in contrast with **another** or **other(s)**
- in the expression **one day**
- with **hundred** and **thousand** when we want to sound **precise** (see page 294)
- in expressions like **only one** and **just one**.

One girl wanted to go out, but the others wanted to stay at home.

One day I'll take you to meet my family.

'How many are there? About a hundred?' 'Exactly one hundred and three.'

We've got plenty of sausages, but only one egg.

1 A or one?

1 day last year – it was 2 very hot afternoon in June – I was hurrying to get home. I was about 3 hour late – well, to be precise, exactly 4 hour and ten minutes: I had taken the train that arrived at the station at 6.15. Anyway, there was 5 woman standing under the trees, and there were several children with her. I saw 6 child clearly – she was 7 lovely dark-haired girl – but I only heard the others. Suddenly 8 strange thing happened. The girl took some stones and leaves out of her pocket, and threw 9 stone after another into the air.

a/an: main uses

We use **a/an** to say **what kind of thing** somebody or something is, **what job** a person does, or **what something is used as**. *A/an* has no plural.

She's **a farmer**.

They're **farmers**.

He worked as **a taxi-driver**.

They worked as **taxi-drivers**.

Don't use the plate as **an ashtray**.

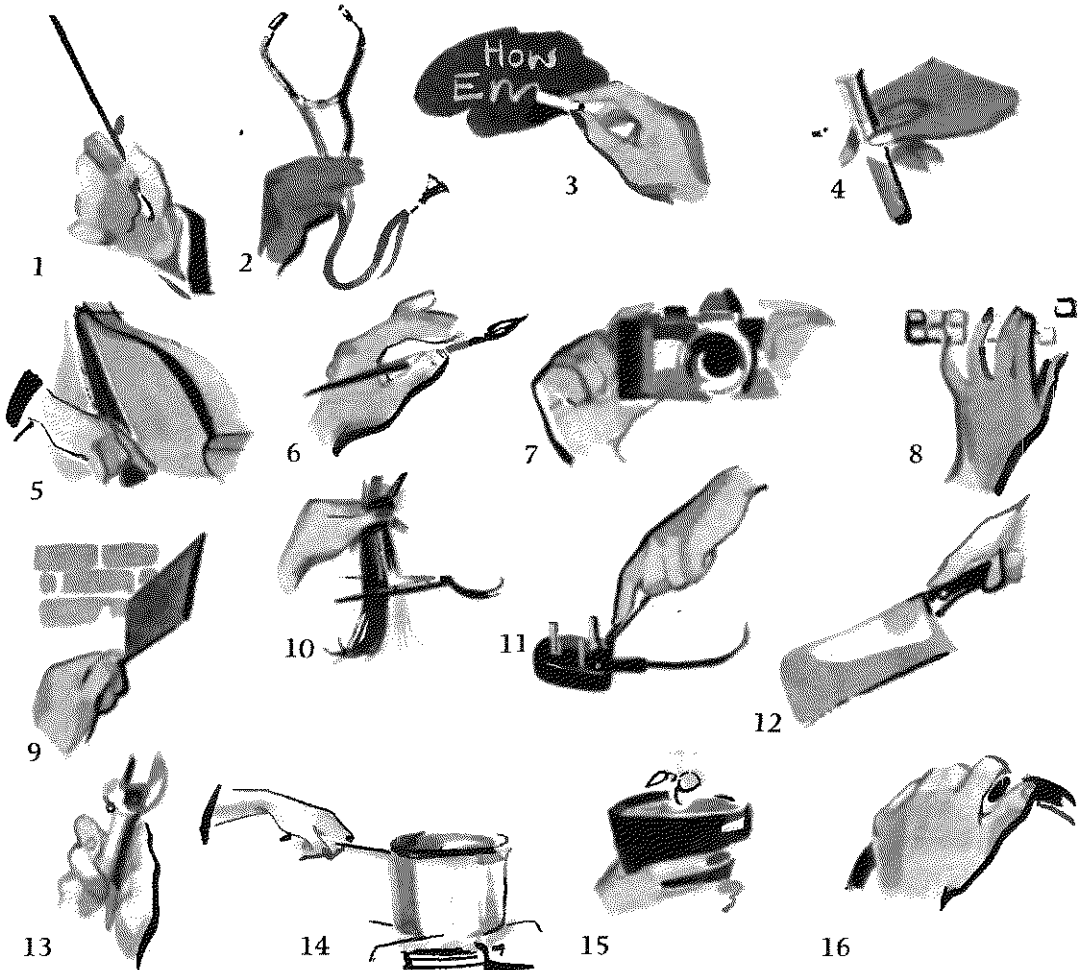
Don't use the plates as **ashtrays**.

1 Say what these people's jobs are, using the words in the box.

Example:

A is a conductor.

builder	butcher	conductor	cook	doctor	electrician
gardener	hairdresser	lorry driver	mechanic	musician	
painter	photographer	scientist	secretary	teacher	



A/an can mean 'any example of something'.

In the plural, we use **no article** or **some** (see page 34 for the difference).

A spider has eight legs.

Spiders have eight legs.

A CD costs more than **a cassette**.

CDs cost more than **cassettes**.

I'd like **a cup of coffee**.

I'd like **some chips**.

2 Say what these people and things are. Then make some similar sentences of your own. Examples:

A doctor is a person who helps people who are ill.

A pen is a thing used for writing.

curtain	person	that water comes out of
dictionary	thing	who helps people to learn things
dentist		who services and repairs cars
lawyer		used for finding the meanings of words
mechanic		who helps people to keep their teeth healthy
tap		that you put across a window
teacher		who helps people with legal problems
telephone		used for talking to people who are far away

?

A/an can mean 'a particular one', if you don't say exactly who or which.
In the plural, we use **some** or **no article**.

A man called while you were out.

Some men called.

James married **a doctor**.

They both married **doctors**.

3 Complete these sentences in any way you like.

- 1 There's a/an ____ in my pocket/handbag.
- 2 In my town, there's a big ____.
- 3 If you see a/an ____ you'll have good/bad luck.
- 4 I recently bought a/an ____.
- 5 I've got a beautiful ____.

We don't use a/an with uncountable nouns. (NOT ~~a~~ rain)

We don't use a/an with possessives. (NOT ~~a~~ my friend)

After **kind of** or **sort of**, **a/an** is usually **dropped**. *a kind of tree* (NOT ~~a~~ kind of a tree)

In **exclamations with what**, **a/an** is **not dropped**. *What a pity!* (NOT ~~What~~ pity!)

A/an usually comes **after quite, rather** and **such**. *quite/rather/such a nice day*

a/an in descriptions

Descriptions: *He's got a long nose.* (NOT ... ~~the~~ long nose.)
She's got an interesting face. (NOT ... ~~the~~ interesting face.)

1 Make sentences like those above to describe the people in the pictures, using some of the words from the box.

long/small nose	long neck	round/square/oval face
big/small mouth	big/small moustache	long/short beard
nice smile/laugh	quiet/loud voice	bad temper
good sense of humour		



2 Describe people you know, using *a/an* + singular as much as possible. If you can work with a partner, describe another person without giving their name. Your partner must try to guess who it is.

Note that *hair* is singular, and has no article.

She's got dark hair. (NOT ... ~~a~~ dark hair OR ... ~~dark~~ hairs.)

the = 'you know which one(s)'

The means 'you know which (one/ones) I mean'.

*I bought a radio and a CD player, but **the CD player** didn't work.*
(= the CD player I just told you about – you know which one.)

***The women** over there work with my sister.*
(= the women I'm pointing out to you – you know which ones.)

*Please close **the door**.* (You can see which one.)

*He's been to **the North Pole**.* (It's obvious which – there's only one.)

We often use **the** with **only** and with **superlatives**.

*She's **the only** woman for me.* *It's **the best** restaurant in town.*

1 Put in the if the speaker and hearer probably know exactly which (one/ones). Put in a/an or – (= no article) if not.

- 1 Who opened ____ window?
- 2 She lives in ____ centre of Glasgow.
- 3 I'd like ____ glass of water.
- 4 My sister is married to ____ farmer.
- 5 ____ man in ____ next flat is French.
- 6 He's ____ oldest child in ____ school.
- 7 Who's ____ girl by ____ piano?
- 8 They've got ____ boy and ____ girl.
____ boy's two years older than ____ girl.
- 9 Today is ____ only day that I'm free.
- 10 'Which coat is yours?' '____ red one.'

2 Put in the, a/an or – (= no article).

'Do you see 1 man standing near 2 door? He works as 3 assistant in 4 same shop as I do. Well, I saw him the other day and he was driving 5 big red Porsche. And do you see 6 expensive clothes he's wearing? Where does he get 7 money to pay for it all? 8 month ago he hadn't got 9 penny. I told you about 10 burglary that we had at 11 shop, didn't I? Do you think I should go to 12 police?'

▲ 3 Work with another student if you can. If you say the following expressions, will he/she know which one(s) you probably mean? If not, add some words so that he/she will know which one(s). Examples:

the teacher (OK) the window → *the window on the right*

the teacher	the window	the light	the lights
the ceiling	the door	the light switch	the school
the lesson	the dictionary	the place	the car the bus
the house	the post office	the station	the President
the government	the restaurant		

generalisations without the

The does not mean 'all'.

We **do not use the** in generalisations with plural and uncountable nouns. Compare:

I like **music**. (NOT ... ~~the music~~.) Can you turn off **the music**?
 She's very interested in **nature**. What is **the nature** of his illness?
 People have to live in **society**. I've joined **the Poetry Society**.
Books are expensive. Put **the books** on the table.

1 Put *the* or – (= no article) in each blank.

There must be something wrong with me. 1 people usually think that 2 babies are sweet and 3 teenagers are annoying. Not me. I think 4 babies are boring. For me, 5 children are only interesting from about 6 age of two, when you can understand 7 things that they say. But 8 time between ages thirteen and twenty are 9 years that I like best. Oh, it's difficult at times, but I still prefer talking about 10 money with a teenager to cleaning a baby's bottom.

We **do not** normally use **the** in generalisations with plural and uncountable nouns, even if there is an **adjective before the noun**.

She's studying **Chinese history**. He collects **antique clocks**.

But we use *the* when a description with *of* follows the noun.

She's studying **the history of China**.

2 Use some adjectives from the box, or other adjectives, to write true (or false!) sentences about yourself. Don't use *the*. If you are in a group, pass the sentences round; see if everyone can guess who wrote what.

casual	classical	detective	foggy	formal	historical
Italian	really hot	pop	romantic	spicy	stormy

- I like eating ____ food.
- I can't stand listening to ____ music.
- I (don't) like reading ____ novels.
- I hate ____ weather.
- I love ____ weather.
- I like wearing ____ clothes.

We can use **the** in generalisations with **singular countable nouns**, to talk about a whole class of things. This is common in scientific and technical language.

Who invented **the telescope**?
I can't play **the piano**.

The tiger is in danger of dying out.
I hate **the telephone**.

Note also:

I love **the sea**. Do you like living in **the country**?
I never go to **the cinema** or **the theatre**.

3 Complete the sentences with some of the expressions from the box.

the aeroplane	the ballpoint pen	the Bible	the camera	the computer
the dog	the fax machine	the novel	the personal stereo	the typewriter
the violin	the whale	the wheel	the X-ray machine	

- 1 Before people invented _____, they couldn't transport heavy loads easily.
- 2 In its early years, _____ wasn't thought to be good reading for young ladies.
- 3 Scientific calculations were much slower before the invention of _____.
- 4 _____ is one of the hardest instruments to play.
- 5 What did people write with before _____?
- 6 _____ is a much faster way of sending letters than the post.
- 7 What can we do to save _____ from dying out?
- 8 _____ is a valuable tool for doctors, but it has its dangers as well.

Never lend books, for no one ever returns them; the only books I have in my library are the books that other people have lent me.

Anatole France

Without music, life would be a mistake.

Nietzsche

I would give anything to hear and to love music, but do the best I can, it is just noise and nothing more.

Catherine the Great of Russia

I don't know anything about music – in my line you don't have to.

Elvis Presley

Classical music is the kind we keep thinking will turn into a tune.

Kin Hubbard

Give me books, fruit, French wine and fine weather and a little music out of doors, played by somebody I do not know.

John Keats

This, books can do – nor this alone: they give New views to life, and teach us how to live.

George Crabbe

I quite admit that modern novels have many good points. All that I insist on is that, as a class, they are quite unreadable.

Oscar Wilde

Nature is usually wrong.

The painter James McNeill Whistler

For expressions like *the blind*, *the old*, see page 72.

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