

Introduction

Welcome!

This book attempts to introduce prospective students to the English language. We hope to create a solid and well-done course to those who wish to learn how to speak, read, and write English. The benefits of learning this language are manifold: English is spoken in more countries than any other language, and is considered the "lingua franca," or international language of the world. It is the primary or major secondary language in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa, and many other countries, and is used by businesspeople, travelers, etc. across the world.

This book is intended for both non-native speakers learning English, and teachers trying to teach the English language. While it does not talk about the aspects of teaching, it contains content that should be useful.

Check back often for more content!

Overview

There are two basic forms of English as an additional language: English to use in an English-speaking region (e.g. by refugees and immigrants) and English to use in a non-English-speaking region (e.g. by international business people).

This textbook offers resources for English teachers working in both contexts. When appropriate we will mark information that is specific to one discipline or the other. Included are language reference information, teaching techniques and tips, historical information about the English language, and activities to be used in your classes.

Terminology

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) refers to English for use in the second of these situations, in a non-English-speaking region. Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) is a common abbreviation for the teaching aspect (education, career and methods).

In North America, in the first situation, English for use in an English-speaking region, is known as English as a Second Language (ESL). In Britain this is called English for Speaker of Other Languages (ESOL) in recognition of the fact that many of the learners already speak more than one language. Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) is a common abbreviation for the teaching aspect.

- *Chapter 0: Morphology and Spelling*

The English alphabet

Note: if the target audience's native language already uses the Latin alphabet, then much of this information can be omitted.

English is written with the Latin alphabet. It consists of 26 letters:

lower-case letters: a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z

upper-case letters: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z

Each letter has a lower-case and an upper-case (or "capital") form. In some cases (e.g. the letters S, X, and O), the upper-case form is simply a larger version of the lower-case. However, some letters have differing forms in upper- and lower-case, such as A, Q, and T.

Lower-case letters evolved from modified forms of the upper-case letters, which were used in ancient times.

Vowels and Consonants

There are 5 vowel letters in English: a, e, i, o, u ("y" and "w" also act as vowels, and are used for orthographic reasons). This does not correlate with the number of vowel sounds, of which there are about 14, depending on dialect.

There are 21 consonant letters: b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z.

In many cases, the spelling of an English word only gives a rough indication of its pronunciation. For this reason, the English spelling system is notorious for being one of the hardest to learn of all the alphabetic scripts.

🔊 [click here \(help·info\)](#) to listen to the pronunciation of the alphabet.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation

Consonants

The symbols used for consonants are shown in the following table. Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the left is voiceless, the one to the right voiced.

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Labio-velar	Dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Stop	p b				t d			k g	
Affricate						tʃ dʒ			
Nasal	m				n			ŋ	
Fricative		f v		θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ		(x)	h
Approximant			(w) w		ɹ		j		
Lateral approximant					l				

- /p/: **pit**
- /b/: **bit**
- /t/: **tin**
- /d/: **din**
- /k/: **cut**
- /g/: **gut**
- /tʃ/: **cheap**
- /dʒ/: **jeep**
- /m/: **map**
- /n/: **nap**
- /ŋ/: **bang**
- /f/: **fat**
- /v/: **vat**
- /θ/: **thin**
- /ð/: **then**
- /s/: **sap**
- /z/: **zap**
- /ʃ/: **she**
- /ʒ/: **measure**
- /x/: **loch, Chanukah** (often replaced by /-k/ and /h-/, respectively)
- /h/: **ham**
- /w/: **whine** (also written /hw/, often replaced by /w/)
- /w/: **we**
- /ɹ/: **run** (often written /r/ in broad transcription)
- /j/: **yes**
- /l/: **left**

Vowels

Received Pronunciation

Received Pronunciation is the prestige British accent, sometimes referred to as *BBC English*. It is used as the standard in most media within Great Britain.

Full vowels

Full vowels are those that appear in stressed syllables.

Monophthongs	Short		Long		
	Front	Back	Front	Central	Back
Close	ɪ	ʊ	iː		uː
Mid	ɛ	ʌ		ɜː	ɔː
Open	æ	ɒ			ɑː

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /ɪ/: bid • /ʊ/: good • /ɛ/: bed (sometimes transcribed /e/) • /ʌ/: bud • /æ/: bat (sometimes transcribed /a/) • /ɒ/: pot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /iː/: bead • /uː/: bood • /ɜː/: bird (sometimes transcribed /əː/) • /ɔː/: bought, board • /ɑː/: father, bard
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Diphthongs	Closing		Centring
	to /ɪ/	to /ʊ/	
Starting close			ɪə ʊə
Starting mid	eɪ ɔɪ	əʊ	ɛə
Starting open	aɪ	aʊ	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /eɪ/: bay • /ɔɪ/: boy • /əʊ/: toe • /aɪ/: buy (sometimes transcribed /ʌɪ/) • /aʊ/: cow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /ɪə/: beer • /ʊə/: boor (falling out of use in British English; often replaced by /ɔː/) • /ɛə/: bear (sometimes transcribed /ɛː/)
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Reduced vowels

Reduced vowels occur in unstressed syllables.

- /ɪ/: roses
- /ə/: Rosa's, runner
- /ɪ/: bottle
- /ŋ/: button
- /ɪ/: rhythm

General American

General American is the standardized accent of the United States, and is the dialect most commonly used in spoken media there.

Full vowels

Monophthongs	Checked			Free	
	Front	Central	Back	Front	Back
Close	ɪ		ʊ	i	u
Close-mid				e	o
Open-mid	ɛ	ʌ		ɜ̃	ɔ
Open	æ				ɑ

• /ɪ/: bid	• /i/: bead
• /ʊ/: good	• /u/: bood
• /ɛ/: bed	• /e/: bayed
• /ʌ/: bud	• /o/: bode
• /æ/: bad	• /ɜ̃/: bird
	• /ɔ/ or /ɑ/: bought
	• /ɑ/: body, pod, father

Note: the vowels /e/ and /o/ are usually diphthongal, so the transcriptions /eɪ/ and /oʊ/ are also often used.^[1]

Diphthongs	Closing	Rhotacized
	to /ɪ/ to /ʊ/	
Starting close		ɪɪ ʊɪ

Starting mid ɔɪ

ɛɪ ɔɪ

Starting open aɪ aʊ

ɑɪ

- /ɔɪ/: boy
- /aɪ/: buy, thigh
- /aʊ/: bout, cow
- /ɪɪ/: beer, here
- /ʊɪ/: boor, manure (often replaced by /ɜː/, sometimes by /ɔɪ/ in American English)
- /ɛɪ/: bear, air
- /ɔɪ/: bore (sometimes phonemicized /oɪ/)
- /ɑɪ/: bar

Reduced vowels

- /ɪ/: roses (for many Americans merged with /ə/)
- /ə/: Rosa's
- /ə/: runner
- /ɪ/: bottle
- /ɪ/: button
- /ɪ/: rhythm

General Australian

Full vowels

Monophthongs	Short			Long		
	Front	Central	Back	Front	Central	Back
Close	ɪ		ʊ	iː	ʊː	
Mid	e		ɔ	eː	ɜː	oː
Open	æ	a		æː	aː	

- /ɪ/: bid
- /ʊ/: good
- /e/: bed
- /ɔ/: pot
- /æ/: bat
- /a/: bud
- /iː/: bead
- /ʊː/: booed
- /eː/: bared
- /ɜː/: bird
- /oː/: bought, board
- /æː/: bad
- /aː/: father, bard

Diphthongs	Closing		Centring
	to unrounded to rounded		
Starting close			ɪə ʊə
Starting mid	ɔɪ	əʊ	
Starting open	æɪ æe	æɔ	

- /ɔɪ/: boy
- /əʊ/: toe
- /æɪ/: bay
- /æe/: buy
- /æɔ/: cow
- /ɪə/: beer
- /ʊə/: **tour** (falling out of use in Australian English; often replaced by disyllabic /tʰɪə/ or monophthongal /oː/)

Reduced vowels

- /ə/: roses, Rosa's, runner
- /ɪ/: bottle
- /ɪ/: button
- /ɪ/: rhythm

References

1.

1. Roca, Iggy & Johnson, Wyn (1999). *Course in Phonology*. Blackwell Publishing.

General rules of spelling and capitalization

English has many rules on capitalization and spelling, and spelling tends to vary between different dialects (especially British English and American English).

Capitalization in English

There are several times when letters must be capitalized in English. They are:

- 1) At the start of a sentence; "*The cat is on the bed.*"
- 2) The first letter of a proper noun (a month/day/country/language/name etc.) and adjectives, adverbs etc. derived from them; "*Peter went to Spain on Tuesday.*" and "*John ate a Spanish dish.*"
- 3) In a religious context, when using 'he' to refer to God; "*He thought it good.*"
- 4) First person singular: "I".

Spelling in English

British English and American English have different ways of spelling certain words, especially those with **ou** in the middle, for example:

1. British English: *colour*, American English: *color*.
2. British English: *honour*, American English: *honor*.

Another variation is the use of 'z' instead of 's' in certain words in American English. 1. British English: *capitalisation*, American English: *capitalization* 2. British English: *modernisation*, American English: *modernization*. 3. British English: *industrialisation*, American English: *industrialization*. This usually only applies to words that end in -ise and -isation.

- Chapter 1: First Sentences

Greetings and Expressions

Before we get into grammar it is useful to learn some common greetings and expressions in English. Here are some common phrases and their translations in Spanish, French, German, Polish respectively.

English	Spanish (Español/Castellano)	French	German	Polish	Arab ic	Chine se	Japane se	Italian
Hello	Hola	Bonjour	Hallo	Dzień dobry	مرحبا	喂	今日は	Salve
How are you?	¿Cómo Estás?	Comment t vas-tu?	Wie geht's?	Jak się masz?	كيف حالك؟	你好 吗？	元気で すか？	Come stai?
I am good/b ad	Estoy bien/mal	Ça va bien/mal	Es geht mir gut/schlec ht	Czuję się dobrze/ź le	انا بخير مستاء	我很 好/不 好	元気で す/元気 じゃな いです	Sto bene/ma le

Goodbye	Adiós	Au revoir	Auf Wiedersehen	Do widzenia	مع السلامة	再见	さようなら	Addio
Thank You	Gracias	Merci	Danke	Dziękuję	شكرا	谢谢	ありがとう ごま ざいま す	Grazie
You're welcome	De nada	De rien	Gern geschehen	Proszę	على الرحب والسعة	不客气	どういた しまし て	Prego
What's your name?	¿Cómo te llamas?	Quel est votre nom ?	Wie heißt du?	Jak masz na imię?	ما اسمك؟	你叫什么？	お名前は何ですか？	Come ti chiami?
My name is...	Me llamo...	Je m'appelle...	Ich heiße...	Mam na imię...	اسمي ..	我的名字是...	私の名前 は。。 です	Mi chiamo. ..

Articles and Adjectives

Next up we will learn two very important things: articles and adjectives. Both articles and adjectives typically occur before the noun they modify, with articles occurring before adjectives.

Articles

Like other languages, English has a definite and an indefinite article. Unlike most Romance languages, English has no gender of nouns and so the articles don't change at all.

- Definite article (used when the noun or nouns are already known):
 - **The**
- Indefinite article (used when the noun or nouns is not already known):
 - For singular nouns: **a**
 - For singular nouns beginning in a vowel or a silent "h:" **an** Note that often "a" is used in front of vowels for some words; you will have to learn the exceptions individually.
 - For plural nouns, the closest thing to an article would be **some**.

Adjectives

Remember that an adjective describes a noun. In English, adjectives are always placed before the noun, for example:

- The **red** apple.
- A **soft** sheep.
- An **angry** dragon.
- The **silly** boys.
- Some **hard** rocks.

Also, English adjectives do NOT agree with number or gender:

- The **red** apples, NOT The **reds** apples
- Some **tall** women, NOT Some **talles** women

The exception, however is the adjective "blond", which agrees with gender in writing:

- The **blond** boy, but;
- The blonde girl.

This is not strictly observed, however. Either "blond" or "blonde" is acceptable, and you are unlikely to be noticed using the feminine form for a male noun or vice versa.

Numbers and Time

Numbers

This page lists numbers used in English and provides phonetic transcriptions to help you pronounce them.

- 1 - one /wʌn/
- 2 - two /tu/
- 3 - three /θri/
- 4 - four /fɔː/
- 5 - five /faɪv/
- 6 - six /sɪks/
- 7 - seven /'sevən/
- 8 - eight /eit/
- 9 - nine /nain/
- 10 - ten /tɛn/
- 11 - eleven /ə'levən/
- 12 - twelve /twelv/
- 13 - thirteen /θɜː'tɪn/
- 14 - fourteen /fɔː'tɪn/

15 - fifteen /fif'tin/
16 - sixteen /siks'tin/
17 - seventeen /sevən'tin/
18 - eighteen /ei'tin/
19 - nineteen /nain'tin/
20 - twenty /'twenti/
21 - twenty-one /twenti'wʌn/
30 - thirty /'θɜːti/
31 - thirty-one /θɜːti'wʌn/
40 - forty /'fɔːti/
50 - fifty /'fifti/
60 - sixty /'sɪksti/
70 - seventy /'sevənti/
80 - eighty /'eɪti/
90 - ninety /'nainti/
100 - one hundred /wʌn 'hʌndrəd/

Time

What time is it?

What is the time?

Do you have the time?

- *Chapter 2*

Plural forms of nouns

Generally, making plurals (more than 1 of something) is very easy in English.

Plural Formation

For almost all nouns we form the plural by adding **s**.

- I have an apple
- I have 5 apples.

For nouns which end with the letter **y** we form the plural by removing the **y** and adding **ies**.

- I have a fly
- I have 5 flies.

For nouns which end with the letter **s** (dress), **ch** (beach), **x** (box), **sh** (bush) or **z** (quiz), we form the plural by adding **es**.

- I have a bus.
- I have 5 buses.

Irregular Noun Plural Formation

There are also a small number of nouns which are irregular. The first word in the following list is the singular form and the second word is the plural form:

- child - children
- man - men
- woman - women
- foot - feet
- tooth - teeth
- goose - geese
- mouse - mice
- fish - fish
- sheep - sheep
- deer - deer
- advice - advice
- information - information
- data - data

As you can see, with some words there is no change to form the plural. The plural form and the singular form are exactly the same.

Personal pronouns

English has 6 personal pronouns.

Subject Personal Pronouns

Subject Pronouns are words that **replace** *subject nouns* or *subject noun phrases*.

I - first person singular (yo, eu, je, ich, أنا)

You - second person singular (tú (usted)*, tu (você)*, tu, du, أنت)

He/She/It - third person singular (el/ella, ele/ela, il/elle, er/sie/es, هي/هو)

We - first person plural (nosotros, nós, nous, wir, نحن)

You - second person plural - rarely used (vosotros (ustedes)*, vós (vocês)*, vous, ihr/Sie, انتم\انتمن)

They - third person plural (ellos/ellas, eles/elas, ils/elles, sie, هم\هن)

(*) formal

Subject Pronouns	Singular (Number)	Plural (Number)
First Person	I	We
Second Person	You	You
Third Person	Masculine (Gender):	He
	Feminine (Gender):	She
	Neuter (No Gender):	It
		They

Subject Pronouns replace subject nouns.

Consider these two sentences:

Charles picks flowers from the garden.
He picks flowers from the garden.

Charles is a *noun*. **Charlie** is also the *subject* of the sentence. Therefore, **Charles** is a *subject noun*. Because **Charles** is a male personal name, the subject of the sentence is male in gender.

He is a *subject pronoun*, describing male nouns. **He** *replaces Charles*.

Subject Pronouns replace subject noun phrases.

Consider these two sentences:

* **BIRDS FROM CANADA** fly south in the winter.
 * **THEY** fly south in the winter.

BIRDS FROM CANADA is a *noun phrase*. **BIRDS FROM CANADA** is also the *subject*. Therefore, **BIRDS FROM CANADA** is a *subject noun phrase*.

THEY is a *subject pronoun*. **THEY** *replaces BIRDS FROM CANADA*.

Subject pronouns agree with the PERSON and NUMBER of subject nouns

Pronouns are either FIRST person, SECOND person, or THIRD person.

Pronouns have NUMBER. This means pronouns are either SINGULAR or PLURAL.

Consider these two sentences:

- * **JOHN AND I** went to the movies.
- * **WE** saw Spiderman II.

JOHN AND I is the *subject*.
JOHN AND I is **FIRST PERSON**.
JOHN AND I is also **PLURAL**.

WE is the **FIRST PERSON, PLURAL** *subject pronoun*. **WE** *replaces* **JOHN AND I**.

Subjects which are third person and singular must agree with the GENDER of the noun as well.

Third Person, **SINGULAR** Pronouns replace *People* or *Things*.
People can be *men* or *women*. Men have a **MASCULINE GENDER**. Women have a **FEMININE GENDER**.
Things are *not* people. In English, things usually have **NO GENDER** (*neuter*).

Note: **ALL** third person, **PLURAL** Pronouns are *the same* (**THEY**).

Consider these sentences:

- * **CINDY** ran three miles on the beach.
- * **SHE** usually runs five miles.

CINDY is a woman. A woman has a **FEMININE GENDER**.
Therefore, **CINDY** is **THIRD PERSON, SINGLE, and FEMININE**.

SHE is the **THIRD PERSON, SINGLE, FEMININE** Subject Pronoun. **SHE** *replaces* **CINDY**.

Consider these sentences:

- * **BOB** watched nine hours of television.
- * **HE** didn't run three miles on the beach.

BOB is a man. A man has a **MASCULINE GENDER**.
Therefore, **BOB** is **THIRD PERSON, SINGLE, and MASCULINE**.

HE is the **THIRD PERSON, SINGLE, MASCULINE** Subject Pronoun. **HE** *replaces* **BOB**.

The third person, single pronoun for most *non-human* (*things*) nouns or noun phrases is **IT**.

- * **THE CAR** is very dirty.
- * **IT** needs a car wash.

THE CAR is a thing. Things have **NO** Gender.
Therefore, **THE CAR** is THIRD PERSON, SINGLE, *but NO GENDER*.

IT is the THIRD PERSON, SINGLE Subject Pronoun for **things** with **NO GENDER**. **IT** replaces **THE CAR**.

Never use **IT** to refer to a person! Use **HE** if the person is a man. Use **SHE** if the person is a woman.

If the gender of the person being referred to is *unknown* or if one wants to refer *generically* to people, **they** is often used.

* Whoever *THEY* were; *they* did a good job.

Copular verb to be: present tense

'To be' is perhaps the most important verb in the English language. It is known as a 'copular verb'. 'Be' is irregular, so its present tense conjugation must be memorized.

The Present Tense

Here is the present tense conjugation, with their IPA equivalents.

- I **am**. /æ:m/
- You **are**. /ɑr/
- He **is**. /ɪz/
- She **is**. /ɪz/
- It **is**. /ɪz/
- We **are**. /ɑr/
- They **are**. /ɑr/

The forms of to be contract to the pronoun, shown here:

- I'm
- You're
- He's
- She's
- It's
- We're
- They're

These contracted forms are used regularly in speech by native speakers.

Here are some examples.

- I **am** 36 years old.
- They **are** hungry.

- *Chapter 3*

Simple present tense

The present simple tense is usually regular. Yet, there are a few exceptions, particularly with verbs ending in 'y'. Compared to most other Indo-European languages, English regular verbs have simple conjugation, because the first and second person forms are the same.

Regular Verbs

Here is an example of the form of the present simple for regular verbs, using the verb "to like":

- I **like** football.
- You **like** football.
- He/She/It **likes** football.
- We **like** football.
- They **like** football.

As you can see from the example above, the infinitive only changes for the 3rd person singular, where an **s** is added to the end of the word.

Irregular Verbs

English has a large number of irregular verbs, most significantly the verb "to be," which you are learning throughout this textbook. Other verbs conjugate in different ways, including:

- Verbs like **can** and **should** do not change in any present conjugation.
- Verbs like **try** add **ies** instead of **s**.
- The verb **have** use a completely different form in the 3rd person singular, in this case **has**.

Negatives

English forms negatives in the Simple Present using *not*.

The verb *to be* is special. Here is the negative form for it.

- I am from Canada. - I am *not* from Canada.
- She is from Finland. - She is *not* from Finland.
- She is from Finland. - She *isn't* from Finland
- She is from Finland. - She's *not* from Finland.

All other verbs use *don't (do not)* or *doesn't (does not)* to form negatives:

- I play football. - I *do not* play football.
- I play football. - I *don't* play football.
- She likes jazz. - She *does not* like jazz.
- She likes jazz. - She *doesn't* like jazz.

Possessives

We use possessives when we talk about things which are owned by somebody or a direct relation to someone or something. In many languages it is common to talk about possession using a structure like 'object of subject' where the object is owned or possessed by the subject. This is possible in English but it generally sounds unnatural - **This is the garden of my mum.**

Usually in English we use possessives - **This is my mum's garden**

Singular Possessives

This is simple. Simply add 's to the end of the noun if the owner or possessor is singular (I only have one mother).

- Tom's pen
- Ross's new house
- Sarah's DVD player
- The dog's dinner (dinner of one dog)

Plural Possessives

If the owner or possessor is plural - i.e. many people own it - then we add the ' after the 's' of the plural noun.

- The dogs' dinner (dinner of many dogs)
- *Chapter 4*

Simple past tense

The past tense signifies actions that were done in the past. Conjugating verbs to show the past tense is very easy in English, almost as easy as conjugating the present tense.

Past Tense

Regular verbs take the ending '-d' or 'ed' in the affirmative. The negative and interrogative are formed using *did* (past of the auxiliary verb *do*) together with the infinitive of the verb. The verb *work* is conjugated as follows:

Affirmative

I worked
you worked
he worked
she worked
it worked
we worked
you worked
they worked

Negative

I did not work or I didn't work
you did not work or you didn't work
he did not work or he didn't work
she did not work or she didn't work
it did not work or it didn't work
we did not work or we didn't work
you did not work or you didn't work
they did not work or they didn't work

Interrogative

did I work
did you work
did he work
did she work
did it work
did we work
did you work
did they work

Negative Interrogative

did I not work or didn't I work
did you not work or didn't you work
did he not work or didn't he work
did she not work or didn't she work
did it not work or didn't it work
did we not work or didn't we work
did you not work or didn't you work
did they not work or didn't they work

Irregular verbs change their form in the past tense affirmative in a variety of ways. The past of *go*, for example, is *went*, of *buy*, *bought*, of *keep*, *kept*. As with the regular verbs, the negative and interrogative are formed using *did* together with the infinitive of the verb. The verb *go* is conjugated in the past tense as follows:

Affirmative

I went
you went
he went
she went
it went
we went
you went
they went

Negative

I did not go or I didn't go
you did not go or you didn't go
he did not go or he didn't go
she did not go or she didn't go
it did not go or it didn't go
we did not go or we didn't go
you did not go or you didn't go
they did not go or they didn't go

Interrogative

did I go
did you go
did he go
did she go
did it go

did we go
did you go
did they go

Negative Interrogative

did I not go or didn't I go
did you not go or didn't you go
did he not go or didn't he go
did she not go or didn't she go
did it not go or didn't it go
did we not go or didn't we go
did you not go or didn't you go
did they not go or didn't they go

External links

- [Wiktionary Appendix:Irregular Verbs.](#)
- [Verbbusters: Complete set of resources for the study of the irregular verbs.](#)

Introducing prepositions

Prepositions are words which add meaning to a sentence. A preposition can tell you where or when something happens.

Prepositions of place

On, under, above, below, behind, in front of, near, next to, opposite...

Prepositions of time

On, At, In

- I'll meet you *at* 18.30
- My birthday is *in* March
- My birthday is *on* the 2nd of March

Adjective / Verbs with prepositions (dependent prepositions)

Listen to, believe in, worried about, dream of...

- *Some Useful Guides and Words*

School and Education

School is a place where students, often children, go to learn. The students, also called pupils, learn in groups called classes. A teacher (or teachers) instructs (teaches) each class. Students listen to the teacher and do schoolwork while at school and then homework in the evening at home.

Types of schools in the United States

In the United States, most children go to public schools for the levels K-12 (kindergarten & grades 1-12). Public schools are operated by the local government and controlled by a local Board of Education (BOA). Members of the BOA are paid representatives who are elected in each city or township. Public schools in each community are supported by local property taxes and are free to the students. Each state, as well as the federal government, has educational regulations that the local schools must follow.

Many people criticize the quality of learning in the local school systems, and are looking for new ways for their children to get an education. Some alternatives to public schools are private schools, magnet schools, Montessori schools, home schooling, for-profit schools and web- or Internet-based schools.

Most private schools are Catholic schools, other Christian schools or private academies. Private schools are usually not free. Students or their families must pay tuition, which can be very expensive. Some parents send their children to private schools to avoid the bad influences of other students. Many people hope that private schools will offer their children more attention or a better education.

Magnet schools are public or private schools that focus on a specific area of studies, such as the visual arts, performing arts (drama), or the sciences.

Montessori schools are learning environments where students can help direct their own studies. Students learn individually, guided by a teacher.

Home schoolers are students who learn at home with the help of a parent or a tutor, often with religious motivations. This method has been criticized for a long time as inadequate. However, a high percentage of these students are above-average performers, demonstrating academic excellence in comparison to their peers. Some people are concerned that home schoolers miss out on socialization, but parents answer that their children get plenty of social contact at church and in the family, and at neighborhood or community events. In addition, many of these parents desire to avoid the socialization that comes specifically

from most public schools, and would prefer their children only to have their socialization from the aforementioned sources.

For-profit schools are schools set up by businesses to make money. Like public schools, these schools usually receive tax money from the government. For-profit schools are relatively new and the schools only exist in a few cities.

Internet-based learning is more common among university-level courses but is starting to be used by some students at the K-12 level.

Education

The goal of schools is to educate their students. Schools use teachers and teaching (didactic) materials to prepare their students with knowledge and skills for future work and life. Education is important for society to function and be productive. By law, American students are required to complete their education (go to school) through high school unless their parent or guardian signs a release note giving them permission to quit school before finishing 12th grade. The great majority of adult Americans have finished high school, and most have gone to at least some college (university-level studies).

People at the school

There are many people with many jobs at a school besides just students and teachers. The head of the school is called the principal. The principal is in charge of the teachers, administration of the school and the well-being of the students. The principal of each school answers to the superintendent of schools, who is in charge of the entire school system and works with the BOA to make sure that the students can learn effectively in a safe and positive environment. Janitors, custodians, groundskeepers and other maintenance workers clean the schools and make sure that the school grounds are clean, safe and tidy. Guidance counselors help students make decisions and counsel troubled students. The school psychologist helps when the problems are serious or abuse is involved. The school nurse helps sick students and helps assure their health. In many schools there are now police or security officers who maintain security for everyone at the school. The school secretaries help the principal, parents and students with various tasks. Teacher's assistants are paid to help out in the classroom and often volunteers also help in the classroom in lower grades. Bus drivers pick children up from home in the morning and take them back home in the afternoon in long, yellow school buses. Substitute teachers (subs) teach or take care of classes when the regular teacher is absent. Cafeteria workers (lunch ladies) prepare and serve lunch and sometimes breakfast in the cafeteria. And sometimes other people come to visit the school to give presentations.

Vacations

Students traditionally attend school for five days a week, about six or seven hours a day, for most of the year. They have vacations, or time without classes, for a few months in the

summer and a few weeks around Christmas/New Year's. Summer vacation is a favorite time for children to relax and have a good time, although they tend to complain of boredom. Others use the time for activities such as athletics, and a somewhat smaller group feels the need to do independent studies over vacations.

Schoolwork is usually made up of writing papers, reading books, doing worksheets, solving mathematical problems, researching different topics, doing special projects, and so on. Of course, the type of schoolwork that a teacher assigns to his or her students depends on the level of the class and the topic under study, as well as the preference of the teacher. Homework is sometimes called assignments, which refers to a task that is assigned.

Classes

Students are divided by ages and ability levels into grades, which are usually subdivided into different groups or classes. "Class" can refer to the group of about 25 students who meet together habitually, even if together they study various topics, as is the case in lower grades. "Class" can also mean course, an academic topic or subject that lasts for a school year or part of a school year. A class of this sort only meets together certain hours of the week, for example one hour every day or three times a week. The other common meaning of the word "class" is everyone who is in the same grade level. In high school especially, the students in one grade are collectively known as a class, identified by their year of graduation. The students who graduate in 2006 are called the class of 2006.

One teacher teaches one class at a time. In lower grades, the same teacher usually has the same group of students, or class, all or most of the day. In higher grades, pupils have a different teacher for each class, or subject. Even in lower grades, specialized instructors usually teach certain courses like art, music, and gym.

Examples of "classes" as courses are reading, general science, and computer class. Students can take classes in the following areas: math (mathematics), including pre-algebra, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus, and statistics; sciences, including biology, chemistry, physical science, physics, and laboratories (labs); language arts including English, literature, composition, and foreign languages like French or Spanish; music including band, orchestra, and choir; social studies, health, gym, government, art, shop, accounting, and home economics, and many more, depending on the school. Other classes or periods of the day include lunch, recess, and study hall.

Parts of the school grounds

The classroom is where most of the learning takes place, the office is where the principal and other school administrators and the secretary or secretaries work. The gym (gymnasium) is where students have gym class, and the locker room is nearby, where the students change clothes and shower after gym. The playground is where kids go for recess, and everyone who drives parks in the parking lot. Everyone eats lunch in the cafeteria (lunch room) except maybe the teachers, who "hide" in the teacher's lounge and are believed to complain about the students. In reality, most teachers will have lunch, a

discussion, and/or may grade schoolwork of the students. The cafeteria is often considered a social vice, because what often happens is that specific groups of children will sit at specific tables and permit only similar children at their table. Many can remember tables with "cool" people, and its opposite. Still, in some schools, this is less severe or nonexistent, while at others, extremely defined. Kids with problems (or a desire to get out of a class, as the case sometimes is,) can visit the school nurse in the nurse's office or a guidance counselor in the guidance office. You can imagine what happens in the art, band and choir rooms. Many science rooms, especially at higher levels, have defining features, although they may vary. (ex. chemical storage, non-wood desks, tool storage, emergency features, etc.) The rooms are connected together by halls (hallways). Often, there are main hallways lined with lockers to store books and the like for the students. Many classrooms exist for teaching various subjects. Often, one teacher or group of teachers will have predominant use of the classroom for teaching, and will put posters and diagrams up throughout the room, often making the teacher(s) and/or subjects taught somewhat identifiable from a glance. As with most public establishments, there are often bathrooms throughout the school, and they are often subject to vandalism and lack of care in certain schools.

Levels of school

(Preschool and daycare); ages 0–5, 3-5 Elementary school (grade school): K-5 (kindergarten and grades one through five); ages 5–11 Middle school (junior high school): Grades 6-8; ages 11–14 High school: Grades 9-12; ages 14–18

The above is not status quo as one changes schools by any means. Often children may start late or early, or may stay back and skip grades. State and Local laws usually dictate ages for starting school. In some places, it may be four years and a certain number of months before one can enter elementary schools. There are also school systems that may split up their grades as K-6 to elementary and change other grades.

Preschool and daycare

Many children attend a sort of day-care or preschool before they are old enough to go to kindergarten. Preschool is usually only a few hours a day and may not be every day. Preschool and daycare can help working mothers be free to go to work. They also can help small children begin to build social skills. Preschool is not a standard part of public education. Preschools are usually small, private institutions run in the neighborhood.

Elementary school

Children begin school at age five or six when they enter kindergarten. Kindergarten in the United States is one year long and children typically attend half-days or every other day. Teachers are usually women and are with one class all or most of the day. Teachers' assistants and classroom volunteers, usually parents, often help out with routine tasks in the classroom.

Classes may be as small as fifteen students to as large as thirty-five. Both boys and girls of about the same age are taught together in the same room. Subjects include basic reading, math, writing, and cultural issues.

Younger students tend to spend a large part of their day playing. For example, a kindergartner's play time is mixed in with time for learning basic concepts such as the alphabet, telling time, and how to read basic words. In later grades, play time is reduced to recess, an unstructured time where students can play or do sports or games for an hour or so.

Grading

Each student gets letter grades in each subject, which range from A to F with A being the best and F being the worst. Pluses (+) and minuses (-) are sometimes used to divide one letter into distinct levels. For example, "B" can be divided into B+, B and B-.

Normally, one must achieve a certain grade measured out of 100 to get a certain letter grade. The scales for what numerical grade constitutes what letter grade often differ by school and teacher(s). Usually, one must have a 92 or a 90 for an "A" range grade, and the letters usually change at a rate of one every ten points with some exceptions. "F" is usually placed at 60-72 percentage points, often at 65. Some systems might not even use "E" as a grade, and skip from "D" to "F" on such a scale.

A GPA (Grade Point Average) is sometimes done out of four points. Usually, achieving an "A" gets one a four, and anything less usually gets a lower point value. These point values are then averaged for this number. Sometimes, for more difficult levels of classes, these numbers are "weighted" in their point values as such.

Sometimes one will get a straight percentage grade, but it is rare to receive this without a letter grade as well.

Some schools now give "L" as a grade to all students, meaning "learning" and the practice is scorned upon. At that point, a grade doesn't matter, since one can not get something otherwise, and the system does not reward those working harder than their peers.

In order to weight assignments, many teachers at higher levels give a certain number of assignments and give them different point values. At the end of the grading period, the points earned is divided by the maximum point total and then multiplied by a hundred to give points out of one hundred.

Discipline

Sometimes students misbehave and must be disciplined. Each school has its own methods, which usually include trips to the principal's office, notes or calls home to the parents, and after-school detentions. Typical offenses are smoking, fighting, cheating, cursing (cussing

or swearing), picking on (bullying) other students, inappropriate clothing (violation of dress code), inappropriate touching or displays of affection, stealing, talking back (insolence), lateness (tardiness), skipping class (cutting class), vandalism, plagiarism or otherwise causing trouble or breaking the rules. Especially serious infractions of student conduct can result in long- or short-term suspension from school, expulsion, or even court dates and jail time, although this is less likely for juvenile offenders.

Several systems of discipline exist, as stated earlier. One common system is to divide the offenses into groups, levels, or tiers. Each one of these has its own unique punishments involved. In such a system, the lowest might be a minor offense, like talking in class, and may be met with a warning, but a repeat offense will put it in the next grouping. The highest usually involves federal offenses and are met extremely seriously.

One system would involve a unique punishment for every situation, but is often difficult to figure out in a school large and/or disorderly enough to prevent a central figure from doing such things, requiring someone such as the teacher to enforce such things on a lower level and decide this. A more efficient method than this case-by-case basis would be some set of rules or a code that would mandate unique punishments for every crime.

Younger children are often subjected to a small set of simplified rules in their classrooms that the teacher places, sometimes with the help of the students. This is in addition to whatever the school requires, but often includes what the school requires, as is relevant to a young child.

Homework

Lesson

Schoolchildren, also called school kids, do homework. They do not like it. At least, they say that they do not like it. Homework is assignments that children do outside of class. However, sometimes students have time in class to do their homework. When a teacher gives an assignment to do during class it is called class work. Both homework and class work are types of schoolwork.

Sometimes students answer questions in a textbook.

Teacher: Class, please turn your books to page seventy-one and do questions one through ten. If you don't finish it is homework due tomorrow.

Teacher: Open your books to chapter three and do every other question on page forty-five. Turn them in on my desk at the end of class.

Other times, homework is doing research and writing a report about something.

Teacher: Your assignment will be a report about the causes of the US Civil War. It should be ten pages long, typed and double-spaced. Please include a bibliography of at least ten cited works. You may use the Internet. Please look up information in at least three books from the school library. Do not make more than three references to encyclopedias.

Students sometimes do homework together in groups. They call these groups study groups. This is part of the student's sense of humor. This is because many American students prefer to socialize, or talk to their friends, than to do any work. Boys may tend to joke around while girls prefer to gossip about other girls.

Students in all levels of school may have to do homework. However, younger students usually have to do less homework than older students. In high school, some students may have to do several hours of homework a night. Students may do their homework at home or in a library. Another place where kids can work on their homework is in study hall. Study hall is an open period of the day. Students can use study hall to read, do homework, maybe talk with their friends, or make trouble.

Students sometimes complain that homework is boring. Other assignments are more interesting. Homework is hard if it makes you think a lot, and easy if it doesn't make you think much. Americans call things that are easy "a piece of cake". When a student finishes his or her homework he or she might like to relax for a while, go outside or watch some TV.

Other homework assignments may be a reading, math problems, an art project, or filling in answers in a worksheet.

Vocabulary

- schoolchildren – niños de la escuela - öğrenci - schüler
- school kids – niños de la escuela - öğrenci - schüler
- homework – tareas - ödev - hausaufgabe
- assignments – tareas (cosas pedidas) - iş,görev - zuweisungen
- class – clase - sınıf - klasse
- students – estudiantes - öğrenci - schüler
- class work – trabajo de clase - sınıf çalışması - klassaufgaben
- schoolwork – trabajo de la escuela - okul çalışması - schulaufgaben
- questions – preguntas, dudas - sorular - fragen
- textbook – libro de texto -ders kitabı - lehrbuch
- due – se debe entregar - yeterli - gerekli - aufgrund
- to turn in – entregar - dönüş - liefern
- to do research – hacer investigación - araştırma yapmak - erforschen
- to write a report – escribir un reporte - rapor yazmak - einen bericht schreiben
- typed - escrito con máquina çeşit- örnek - typisierte
- double-spaced – con espacio doble (entre líneas de texto) çift ara -
- bibliography – bibliografía kaynak -bibliyografya

- works – obras işler
- information – información bilgi
- books – libros kitaplar
- library – biblioteca kütüphane
- references – referencias danışmalar başvurular
- encyclopedias – enciclopedias ansiklopedi
- study groups – grupos de estudio çalışma grubu
- socialize – socializar toplum içine girmek -girişgen
- joke around – hacer bromas şakalaşmak
- gossip – chismear dedikodu
- younger – más jóven çok genç
- older – más grande çok yaşlı
- at home – en casa evde
- study hall – periodio (sala) de estudio çalışma salonu
- open period – periodo abierto bir ders
- read – leer okumak
- make trouble – hacer problemas sorun yaratmak(başbelası)
- complain – quejarse şikayet etmek yakınmak
- boring – aburrido sıkıcı
- interesting – interesante ilginç ilgi çekici
- hard – difícil (duro) zor
- easy – fácil kolay
- think – pensar düşünmek
- a piece of cake – algo fácil, “un pedazo de pastel” bir parça kek
- to finish – terminar bitmek,bitirmek,son
- reading – lectura okuma
- math problems – problemas de matemática matematik problemi
- art project – proyecto de arte sanat projesi
- filling in answers – llenando respuestas cevapları doldurma
- worksheet – hoja de trabajo çalışma kağıdı,test

Stores, Shopping and Money

Stores are places that sell things. People go to stores to buy things. There are many different types of stores. Each store sells different things. Some stores sell clothes, others sell electronic equipment, and still others sell food, or toys.

Ways to pay

People use money to pay for things at stores. Cash is a type of money that is very easy to use. Cash includes paper bills and metal coins. In the United States, cash is also called legal tender and is issued by the US Treasury. Another common way to pay for things is with checks. Customers go to banks to open checking accounts, or bank accounts that have

checks. Checks are pieces of paper that people give to stores instead of cash. Stores then take the checks to the banks. Then, the banks give the stores money from the bank accounts of their customers. The other main way that people pay for things is with credit cards. A credit card is a piece of plastic that some banks issue to their customers. Customers can use credit cards to buy things more quickly than with checks.

Kinds of stores

Most stores sell new things but some stores sell old or used items. The advantage of buying used things is that they are cheaper (that is, less expensive). In America, stores sell used books, used clothes, used cars and very old used furniture and other things. Very old used things are called antiques.

Stores are usually physical places but are sometimes virtual places. Virtual stores are Internet sites where people can buy things. One of the most famous virtual stores is Amazon.com, a web site that sells books and many other things.

When people go to a store to buy things they say that they are going shopping. When people look for things at a store it is called browsing or window shopping. Sometimes Americans do this as a pleasure activity or to relax. Because of this, people sometimes criticize Americans as being materialistic.

The part of a store where customers pay is called the check-out counter or check-out aisle. There, a clerk helps ring up the products to register their prices. To do this, the clerk uses a cash register. If the cash register is computerized, the clerk uses a scanner to ring up the prices. Paying at the register is also called checking out. Sometimes lines of people at the register are long. When this happens, it takes a lot of time to pay and customers have to wait for several minutes. This can be stressful.

People go to expensive stores to buy luxury items. This makes them feel good. Nice stores like this are often at malls or shopping centers. Rich Americans buy many luxury items, and so do many lower-income Americans, too. The United States is a consumer society, where people use the money that they make to buy more and more consumer products.

Telling the Time

Talking about time is important to be able to speak English well but it can be confusing because of different sayings and formats for time in different countries.

For example, in the USA it is very rare for people to use the 24 hour clock (e.g. 18.30) when speaking or writing. The 24 hour clock is often used in the United Kingdom and Ireland but not often in spoken English.

Asking for the time

- What's the time?
- What time is it?
- Do you have the time? / Have you got the time?

Giving the time

- (12.00, 00.00) It's 12 o'clock / It's 12 / It's 12 (o'clock) in the morning / evening
- (12.05, 00.05) It's five past twelve / It's 12 'oh' 5 / It's five past twelve (in the morning/afternoon) / It's five after twelve

Rail Travel

RAIL TRAVEL **Buying a train ticket**

A young traveller goes up to the ticket office in a Railway Station in England:

- Traveller: "A ticket to Coventry, please."
- Clerk: "Is that a single or a return?"
- Traveller: "A return, please. "
- Clerk: "That's five pounds seventy then."
- (The traveller hands over a ten pound note.)
- The Ticket Clerk takes the money and gives out a two part ticket along with some coins.
- Clerk: "Four pounds thirty is your change. Platform 3, you'd better hurry."
- Traveller: "Thanks"

The young traveller checks his change and hurries off as the Ticket Clerk serves the next passenger.

(Note that the exchange tends to be hurried and clipped. Flowery, extended sentences aren't needed, just the required information, a little courtesy, and a check of the coins and the tickets. Mistakes do happen, especially if you are in a hurry.)

A quick check now can save problems later:

The traveller rushes back to the ticket office, and tries to speak to the same Ticket Clerk:

- Traveller: "Sorry, these tickets say Daventry not Coventry"
- Clerk: "You said Daventry, sir."
- Traveller: "I'm sure I did not. I wanted a ticket to Coventry."

- Clerk: "Let's have a look then."
- (The Clerk takes the tickets back and examines the two pieces of the ticket.)
- Clerk: "OK. Return to Coventry, same fare."
- (The Clerk prints out two new parts to the ticket.)
- Clerk: "Here you go. Coventry, return."
- (The Clerk passes the new ticket back to the Traveller.)
- Traveller: "Thank you very much."

The traveller hurries off again with the correct tickets, just in time to board the train to Coventry.

There are many ways to ask the same question (or be asked):

- "Is this the train to Liverpool?"
- "Is this the train for Liverpool?"
- "Does this train go to Liverpool?"
- "This the Liverpool train?" (notice that the "is" can be left out in general speech)
- "Going to Liverpool?"
- "Liverpool train?"
- "Liverpool?" (although this can be confusing, meaning many things in just one word.)

(Note that some of these sentences are technically incorrect, but are acceptable in general speech. When writing English, outside of character dialogue or quotation, be specific and grammatically correct.)

- **Glossary**
 - Luggage - Bags carried by a passenger. Can be suitcases, backpacks, boxes or any bag.
 - Lost Luggage - An office where items that passengers have forgotten are taken.
 - Fare - The cost of the ticket.
 - Ticket - The token given to a passenger to allow them to travel, showing the cost and destination etc.
 - Guard - on British trains, a train company worker checking tickets and keeping passengers safe.
 - Change - The money returned to somebody who paid with more than the cost of the transaction.
 - Train - A group of carriages rolling along rails, carrying passengers or freight.
 - Passenger - A person, usually not counting the driver, riding in a vehicle.
 - Return - A type of ticket allowing *there and back* travel.
 - Single - A type of ticket allowing one way travel, that is just to *there*.
 - Destination - another word for the place the train passenger is going to.