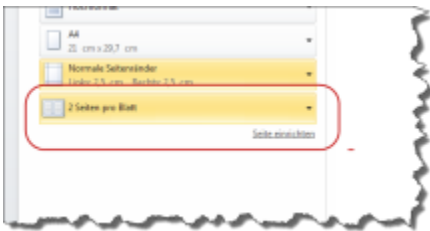


Oxford Online Placement Test (OOPT)





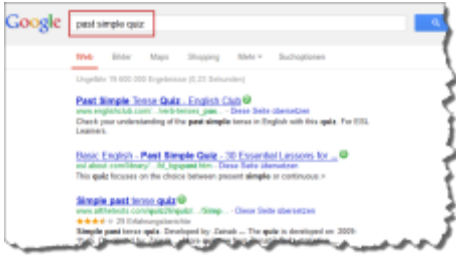




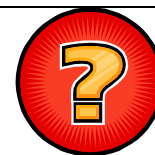
Print this out two pages per sheet.

There is no need for color.

Read it in front of your computer with the file open. There are lots of hyperlinks you can click on as you read.

Summary

<p>Bring photo ID to the OOPT.</p> 	<p>Check the sound is turned on.</p> 
<p>It might be a good idea to do a course at your local VHS. Wiesbaden Mainz Frankfurt Buxtehude</p>	<p>Listen to more English before the test. Try the Stitcher app.</p> 
<p>This document has lots of hyperlinks to the internet so read it on your computer and make sure you are online.</p>	<p>Learn grammar from YouTube. Just search for 'English grammar es!'. You can find the grammar areas you need below.</p> 
<p>Don't be lazy. Don't say: <i>Man braucht doch kein Englisch!</i> Don't let the 'Bestätigungsfehler' and the 'Verfügbarkeitsheuristik' fool you into thinking English is not important.</p>	<p>Test your grammar by typing the grammar area + quiz into a search engine. For example,</p> 
<p>You are too old to learn English by 'Sprachgefühl'. To get better at a language you have to know the details. I know it's not easy to accept. <u>But you are just too old.</u></p> 	<p>Start listening to Business Story of the Day from NPR.</p> 



Section 1: Frequently Asked Questions

Is the test important?

Yes, the test is important. The more work you put into preparing for it, the better the result you will get.

The better the result you get on the test now, the easier your life will be at the WBS. For example, there are many exams at the WBS that you cannot register for unless you have a minimum number of OOPT points.

Can I prepare for the test?

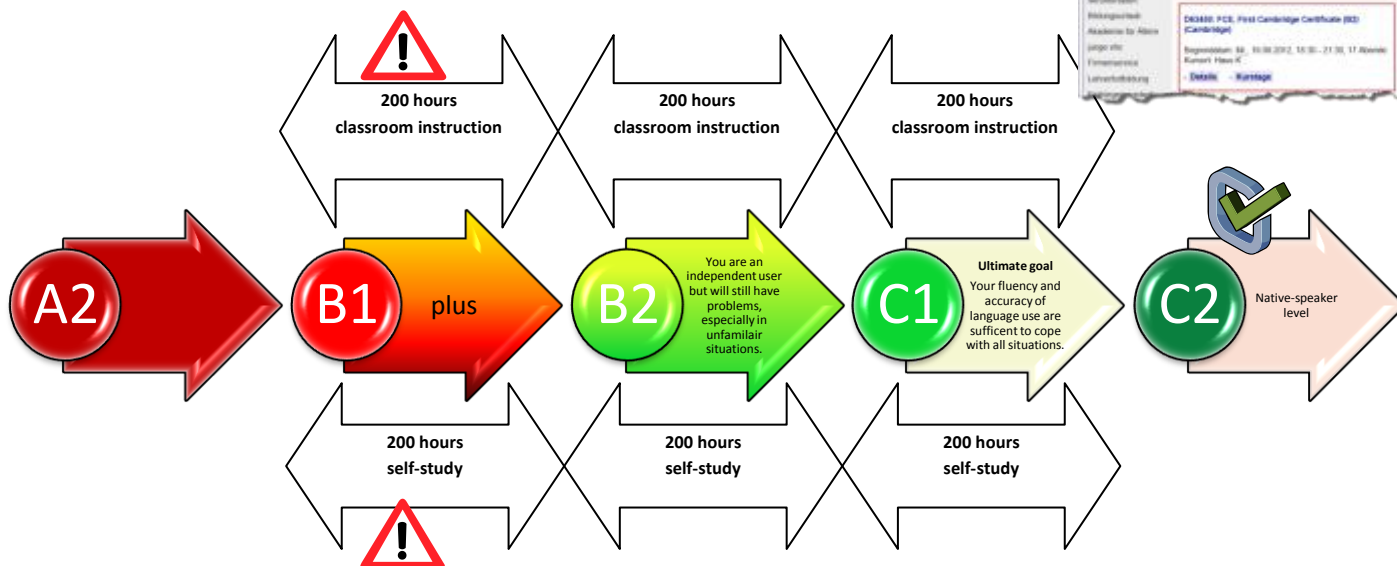
Yes, you can. It is possible to prepare for the test by:

- 1) Learning more about the test format (section 2 of this document)
- 2) Working on specific areas of your English (section 3 of this document)

It is in your interest to start working on your English now. Now. Not tomorrow. Now. Don't forget it takes many hours of work to move up one level of English. As you can see in the visual below, the rough rule of thumb is that it takes 200 hours of classroom instruction plus 200 hours of learning at home to move up one level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

We cannot provide you with the amount of classroom instruction you need if your English is B1 or lower. You should consider doing a course at your local VHS. Most larger VHSs in Germany offer BEC Preliminary, BEC Vantage or FCE exam preparation courses.

Your ultimate goal is C1, by the way. If you have high C1, you can say what you want and do what you want in a foreign language. If your English is already C1 consider doing the BEC Higher, CAE or ILETS exams to get a qualification recognized around the world.



What do all these letter and number combinations mean? B2? C1?

The letter-number combinations have replaced such expressions as beginner, intermediate, upper-intermediate etc. You can read more about them here:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_European_Framework_of_Reference_for_Languages



As a guide, most students who leave the German secondary education system should have the B2 level, or upper-intermediate. At the WBS, we assume that every student is at least a low B2 when they start in semester 1.

You will need to work hard if this is not the case.

Unfortunately, our surveys show that the weaker your English (B1 or lower), the less you will do to improve it. Lack of work is the main reason for students not improving.

It is **not** lack of ability.

It is **not** lack of intelligence.

It is lack of work.



Why do I watch Köln 50677 and eat chips on the sofa instead of learning English?



Unfortunately, learning a language requires many, many hours of work. Even if you start doing 7-10 hours of English a week it will take a few months before you really notice a difference. This can be frustrating. To deal with this frustration your mind may begin playing tricks on you.

„Man braucht doch kein Englisch.“

If you do badly in the OOPT, your mind may try to persuade you that you don't need English. It is often easier to persuade yourself you don't need English than accept that your English is just not good enough.

Over the last few years we have noticed a growing difference between the level of English our students think is enough to get by in German business life and the level of English we think you need to get by in German business life.

Many students think that they can get through business life *“mit Händen und Füßen”*. And this can indeed work if someone is trying to sell you something. In these situations, they will be very motivated to work around your lack of ability in English.



We, on the other hand, are trying to get you ready for situations where your communication partner doesn't want to read what you write or listen to what you say. If it is hard to do business with you because your English is not good enough they will go with someone who can. If you don't know that a thousand units is written 1,000 and not 1.000 then they will find someone who does.

Our hands-and-feet students often make two logical errors:

1. One is thinking that because they personally don't know many people who need a high level of English at work this means that statistically German business people don't need a high level of English at work. This is known as the availability heuristic. It's called the *Verfügbarkeitsheuristik* in German. In general, the better your English, the more people you know who need English at work. And the worse your English, the fewer people you know who need English at work.
2. The second error is known as the confirmation bias (*Bestätigungsfehler*). Students only look for the information that confirms that a low level of English is ok and ignore all other information. How can you persuade yourself you don't need English? This won't be so easy. You can see English everywhere in the business world in Germany. Every job advertisement you see for the good **graduate jobs** will have 'verhandlungssicheres Englisch' as an essential requirement, for example. But if you find one, just one, job ad that doesn't have this as a requirement your mind will persuade you that this one example is more important than the hundred contrary examples.

Is the OOPT a good test?

The OOPT is a good reflection of your English ability. However, it is not perfect.

Nevertheless, it provides us with a **good indicator** of your listening and reading comprehension skills and a reasonable clue to your potential ability to write. But it doesn't test your speaking ability for example.



Section 2: Test format



At the test

You will need photo ID (i.e. with your picture on it), such as your identity card (*Ausweis*) or your passport.

You will need your HS RM matriculation number, if you already have one.

You might need your login details to the WBS computer system (HDS-Konto). If you have them, bring them with you.

Before you start

Double check the sound is turned on. If it is turned off, turn it on.

Double check the in headphones are plugged properly.



Starting the test

The OOPT is an online test so you will need to launch a web browser. For security reasons, we currently require that you use Microsoft Internet Explorer.

- 1) You will have been given a slip that looks like this. Type the web address on it into the browser:

www.oxfordenglishtesting.com/login

Go to <http://www.oxfordenglishtesting.com/login> and enter the details below into Organisation login

Student name:	User name:	Password:	Org ID:
Student 001 Group 77424	u2006492	ipmguJeG	000321

Note: numbers in passwords are underlined

You won't need the information on the far left.

- 2) You will see this page. As you are doing the test as part of the WBS, you need the **Organisation login** on the left. Ignore the Personal login on the right.

Now enter your details from your login slip in the spaces provided and click on the login button.

OOPS!

If you make a mistake you get the error message: **Invalid login details, please try again**. Enter your details again.

You probably made one of these mistakes:

- i) You entered the information under Student name. Ignore this information.
- ii) The password is case sensitive: so 5b8HsQLi, not 5b8hsqli.
- iii) Numbers (5 and 8 in this case) are underlined. This is just to make it easier to recognize them as numbers. **Don't try to underline the numbers.**
- iv) The Org ID has three (3) zeros not two, so **000321**, not **00321**.

Go to <http://www.oxfordenglishtesting.com/login> and enter the details below into Organisation login

Student name:	User name:	Password:	Org ID:
Student 002 Group 77424	u2006493	<u>5</u> b8HsQLi	000321

Note: numbers in passwords are underlined

- 3) If you entered everything correctly this is the next page you see.

First name / last name

Enter your first and last name in the exact same format as on your student ID.

So if your name is Jennifer on your student card, enter that name, even if all your friends call you Jenny.

Email

You have to enter an email address.

It doesn't matter what email address you enter as we will not be sending you the results by email.

But you have to enter one.

If it won't accept it, make up an email address:

Dfsfsdsdfsdf@yahoo.com, or student@student.com

First language

Don't worry too much if you are not sure. Just put in the language you feel most comfortable speaking.

Program

Select IBA, BBA, BBL etc. from the drop-down menu.

Semester

Select your current semester from the drop-down menu.

Test date

Use the British English format: DD.MM.YY

Student ID Number

= matriculation number from the WBS on your student ID if you have one.

Click save and then confirm your save.



- 4) After you click save you will see this page. Just click on the [Oxford Online Placement Test](#) and a new window will open.

If it doesn't open, allow pop-ups.

- 5) **Select your starting level**

Test	Expiry date	Status
Oxford Online Placement Test	11/02/2013 23:59	Not started

Select your starting level
Choose from the options below to select your starting level for this test.

- Please choose a starting point for me
- Lower level starting point – for beginner and elementary students
- Mid-level starting point – for pre-intermediate and intermediate students
- Higher level starting point – for upper-intermediate and advanced students

For most students it's simpler to pick the **Mid-level starting point**.

In fact, it doesn't really matter. The test is adaptive. It reacts to the questions you get right and wrong to decide what questions to give you next.

If you get the first few questions **right** at the mid-level the system will start asking you harder questions until it finds your level. If you get the first few questions **wrong**, the system will start asking you easier questions until it finds your level.

The test

The test is divided into two parts:

- 1) The first part tests your **Use of English**.
- 2) The second part tests your **Listening** skills.

The exact number of questions you have to answer depends on you.

After one or two mid-level questions, the test will start giving you slightly harder questions and keep giving you slightly harder questions until you start getting questions wrong. That borderline between where you get questions right and get questions wrong is your score.

The more inconsistent you are, the longer the test will take to judge your English level. So if you get some mid-level questions right but others wrong, the system will need to ask you more questions to make sure what level you are.

Use of English:

Section 1:
Approximately 30
Questions

Listening:

Section 2:
Approximately 15
Questions

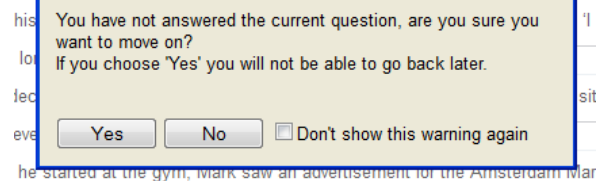
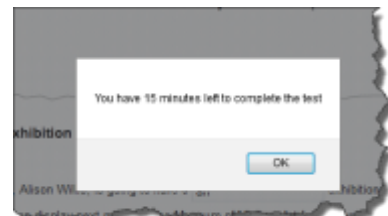
Please note:



There is a time limit. When you have only 15 minutes left, you will see this message.

If you leave a space blank you will see this error message.

You cannot go back to questions you skipped.



Section 1: Use of English

Use of English • Section 1: Approximately 30 Questions

In section 1, there are **three** main types of questions.

Type 1

You can see an example of the first type of question on the right.

What does it test?

These questions will be testing your knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.

Format

There is a short conversation and a dropdown menu gives you a choice of **four** answers.

How to tackle such questions

Select a word or phrase to complete the conversation shown below.



Man: I had to _____ that job offer in the end.

Woman: Why?

Man: The salary just wasn't good enough.

1) Try to recognize the grammar or vocabulary area that is being tested

The question will be testing an area of grammar or vocabulary. Try to work out what type of answer they are looking for **before** you click to see the four choices.

Very often it is easy to recognize the type of grammar they are looking for. For example:

Example 1:

Man: It's very hot in here.

Woman: Yes, it's boiling.

Man: Would you mind the window?

After the expression "would you mind", you normally have the gerund, or -ing form of the verb. So the correct answer will probably end in -ing. In fact, you have probably already worked out that the missing word is 'opening'.

2) Read the whole conversation

Concentrate on the words **after the gap**. Many students just read up to the gap and then pick the first answer that seems correct. This is not a good idea.

Example 2:

Man: Should we go for a walk Wählen Sie ein Element aus. the rain?

Woman: Why not? The forecast says it will stop soon.

Man: Let's go in an hour then.

In this case, it is crucial that you realize the importance of the fact that the word after the gap is a noun (the rain). Of the four choices only one:

- 1) is correct in its form. The expression is 'in spite of', not 'in spite', so 'in spite' is wrong.
- 2) fits the meaning. Only 'even though' and 'despite' fit the meaning of the sentence.
- 3) fits the grammar of being followed by a noun. So which is the correct answer? 'Even though' or 'despite'?

Type 2

These questions are slightly harder to answer.

What does it test?

These questions will be testing your knowledge of:

- I) [Phrasal verbs](#)
- II) [Idioms](#)
- III) [Irony and sarcasm](#)

Format


In this question type, you have to read the dialogue on the right of the screen.

Use of English • Section 1: Approximately 30 Questions Time allowed 20

Read the dialogue. Then, select the correct answer from the options below.

11 What does the man mean?

- A. I'm not worried about missing the start of the play.
- B. I need to leave at 8 pm to be on time for the play.
- C. I'm not going to miss any part of the play.



Woman: Don't you need to leave now if you want to see the beginning of the play?
Man: Don't worry about it. It doesn't start until 8 pm.

The question will ask you about one of the comments/questions of one of the people talking and will be framed like this:

- What does the man mean?
- What does the woman mean?
- What does the **second** comment mean?

Make sure you select the right person/comment. In the example on the right, it is the woman's comment you need to analyze.

Only one of the three choices on the left repeats the information/meaning. It won't use the same words, but the meaning will be the same.

Read the dialogue. Then, select the correct answer from the options below.

12 What does the woman mean?


- A. It's taking a lot of money.
- B. It's bringing in a lot of money.
- C. It's hardly making any money.



Man: Timothy's business seems to be thriving.
Woman: Actually, I think he's only just about breaking even.

Very often all parts of the dialogue will have words you do not know or are unsure of, not just the comment you have to analyze. In most cases, however, you just need to concentrate on the comment itself.

Example:

Read the dialogue. Then select the correct answer for the options below.	
What does the woman mean?	
A I'm sorry I had to postpone the meeting.	
B I will pay next time.	
C The cost was too high.	Man: I'm sorry I couldn't talk you round. Woman: It was the price that put me off.

To be able to answer this question confidently you need to know the two phrasal verbs 'talk someone round' and 'put someone off'. Nevertheless, even if you don't understand what 'talk someone round' means it is possible to work out that something didn't work and she is explaining why.

Type 3: Cloze test

What is a cloze test?

<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%C3%BCckentexttest>

The computer system compares the answer you type into the gap with the correct answer, or answers, is has stored in the system.

What does it test?

This section will be testing your reading comprehension and ability to understand a text. In particular, it will be testing your knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.

How hard will it be?

The cloze test you get depends on how well you answered the previous questions.

Type only one word in each space.

Complete the text below. Write **ONE** word only into each space. There is an example (0) at the beginning.

The Microwave

The first microwave produced for domestic use 0 was _____ invented in 1947. This was after ten decades spent making improvements to the first commercially-used microwave. 21 _____ was tested in a restaurant in Boston, USA, in 1945. This restaurant machine stood almost two metres high, weighed 345 kg, and cost \$1,000.

'The early domestic microwaves were out of the world,' says Elizabeth Walker. 22 _____ ran a microwave cookery school in London in the 1970s. 'One of the best things was that you could adjust the power and cooking speed. We 23 _____ to do cakes and demonstrate how to simmer sauces, and make casseroles. There was hardly anything you 24 _____ not do! However, the microwave has 25 _____ considerable criticism from professional cooks, in spite of its speed and efficiency. 'We always hated them,' says a head chef at a well-known London restaurant. 'I don't really know 26 _____ I feel that way. Perhaps it's 27 _____ microwaves represent speed and a lack of skill.' Many chefs will think this way. Nonetheless, the domestic microwave remains a standard part of the modern kitchen.

Complete the text below. Write **ONE** word only into each space. There is an example (0) at the beginning.

Technique

- i) Read the whole text first.
- ii) Reread sentence by sentence, paying particular attention to the words immediately after the gap. These are often very important.

Some students just read the sentence up to the gap then type in a word that makes sense. Then they jump to the next sentence with a space. This is a big mistake.

When you have finished this question, the first section is over.

Listening



Put on your headphones and double check the sound is on.

You can play each recording twice.



On very rare occasions the recording won't play a second time.

In this case, just pick an answer at random and move onto the next question. If it happens again, put your hand up and inform the teacher. Keep in mind it is technically impossible for the teacher to replay a question. The only remedy would be to let you retake the test from the beginning.

There are **two** types of questions

Type 1: Only one question per recording

Read the sentences below. Then, listen to the recording. Select the correct answer from the options below. You will have time to play the recording twice.

33 Two colleagues are discussing their company's annual sales conference. What do they both agree about?

- A The venue proved more suitable than ones used previously.
- B It would be good to have a dinner for everyone on the final evening.
- C The chairman managed to gauge the level of expertise of the audience well.
- D It would be a good idea to hold such conferences every other year in future.

Type 2: There are two questions per recording

Listening • Section 2: Approximately 15 Questions Time allowed 30

Read the sentences below. Then, listen to the recording. Select the correct answer from the options for each question below. You will have time to play the recording twice.

34 A woman is talking to a man about her recent holiday. What does the woman say about her trip?

- A It was fun being in a large group of other nature lovers.
- B It was worth going to have a brief view of some whales.
- C She found it difficult to tell the dolphins from the porpoises.
- D She was upset that she didn't manage to see any humpback whales.

35 The woman suggests that the photos she took included

- A good ones of dolphins.
- B great shots of the water.
- C close-ups of whale backs.
- D many shots of the other travellers.

Technique:

1) Listen for meaning not words

They are testing your understanding of meaning.

They are not testing your ability to hear words that you have just read.

Don't assume that if you hear the same word(s) in the recording as you have read in the answers that this is the correct choice. In most cases, but not all, the correct answer will not use any of the words in the recording.

2) As you read the answers, think of synonyms for the words

Let's imagine this was one of the answers:

A The venue proved more suitable than ones used previously.

As you read, think of some possible alternatives for these words.

Venue = location, or something specific such as hotel or conference hall.

Proved = turned out to be

Suitable = appropriate

Ones = location, or something specific such as hotel, conference.

Previously = in the past, or something specific such as last year.

If you are lucky you will hear these words in the recording.

3) Some of the answers are indirect, especially as they get harder

A man and a woman are shopping for a new kitchen

Man: What about this kitchen? It has everything we need.

Woman: Our curtains are green.



What is the woman trying to say? It's not so easy to tell. What do you think?

Answer: She is rejecting this kitchen as a good choice because of the color. Obviously, the color of the kitchen does not match the green color of the curtains they already have.

End of Test

Thank you for taking this test.

Your results are available from the institution that provided you with your login and password.

Check with the person overseeing the test to see if you have to switch off the computer.

In most cases: Don't turn off the computer. Just click '*abmelden*'.



Section 3: How to prepare for the test

You probably have a few days between reading this and sitting the test. Use the time wisely.

Use of English

From the material above, you can see that the main areas tested in this part of the exam are:

- 1) The range and accuracy of your **grammar**
- 2) The range and accuracy of your **vocabulary**
- 3) How well you know **phrasal verbs**
- 4) How well you know English **idioms**
- 5) If you can recognize **irony and sarcasm**

1) Grammar

The range and accuracy of grammar is an important indicator of how good your English is. Accuracy means not making mistakes in use, but range is just as important. The more complicated the issues you want to express in English, the more complicated the areas of grammar you will need to master.

What can you do to improve your grammar?

Google

Take a look at the three areas of grammar below. These are some examples of the areas of grammar you should be good at to get a good score on the OOPT.

1) Gerund

Explanations:

- I. <http://video.about.com/esl/Learn-ESL--What-Is-the-English-Gerund-.htm>
- II. <http://www.grammar-quizzes.com/gerundsum.html>

Quizzes:

- I. http://www.englishclub.com/grammar/verbs-gerunds_quiz.htm
- II. <http://academic.cuesta.edu/ahalderma/gerinfing.htm>

2) Future tenses: present simple and continuous used for the future, future continuous, future perfect and future perfect continuous

Explanations:

- I. <http://esl.about.com/od/grammarstructures/a/fcont.htm>
- II. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udNmaJFwHE4>

Quizzes:

- I. http://esl.about.com/library/quiz/blgrquiz_futureforms.htm
- II. <http://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/exercises/tenses/future.htm>

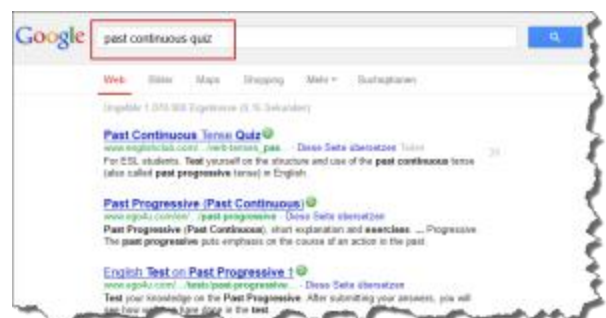
3) Present perfect continuous and past perfect continuous

Explanations:

- I. <http://www.ego4u.de/de/cram-up/grammar/present-perfect-progressive>
- II. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vVUXVagnoIY>

To find the explanations above, all we did was Google the grammar area. The first time we just typed in the name of grammar area to get the explanations.

So typing *gerund* plus *explanation* got us some good results.



It often helped to add the letters: esl. This stands for English as a second language. This will make sure you go a site designed for people learning English.

The second time we typed in the name of the grammar area and added the word *quiz*. Again adding the letters esl can be helpful.

Try this yourself

Here is a complete list of the grammar areas that are important to get a good **B2** score on the test. As you go through the list Google the area + quiz to test how well you know the grammar area.

Grammar areas

1. All the past tenses
 - a. Except maybe the past perfect continuous – I had been working there for ten years.
2. All the present tenses
 - a. Including the use of the present tense to talk about the future – I am flying to Ireland on Friday.
 - b. The present perfect continuous could still be a problem – I have been traveling to Ireland for years.
3. All the future tenses
 - a. Including the future continuous and future perfect
4. Passives of the above
5. Modal verbs
6. Conditionals (if-clauses)
 - a. Both basic and advanced areas (mixed conditionals etc.)
7. Relative clauses
8. Countable and uncountable nouns
9. Article and determiners
10. Adverbs and adjectives
11. Comparatives
12. Prepositions (including noun/verb/adjective + preposition)
13. Indirect questions
14. Reported speech
15. Gerunds and infinitives
16. Subject-verb agreement
17. Parallel constructions
18. Confusing words and false friends
19. Expressing opinions



YouTube



YouTube has lots of good online resources to help you improve your grammar.

Try these two:

- I. <http://www.youtube.com/user/SchoolOfEnglish/videos?view=1>
- II. <http://www.youtube.com/user/JamesESL>

Smartphone

If you have a smartphone, here's a useful App to help you with your grammar:

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/mobile-learning/johnny-grammars-quizmaster>

Internet

There are lots of places on the internet you can use to improve your English. Check out this website from the BBC:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/>



Cracking 80

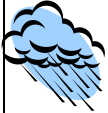
For some courses you will need to get 80 points, i.e. C1, on the OOPT. The vocabulary and grammar you need to get 80 points will be very advanced. Below you can see just two examples of these advanced language areas.

Inversion

We are used to seeing inversion when we form questions:

Statement: I have already had a meal.

Question: Have you already had a meal?



In German, the use of inversion is even more extensive:

Es hat geregnet.

Geregnet hat es.

Under no circumstances should you assume that questions are the only time you find inversion in English. In fact, the previous sentence provides such an example as 'under no circumstances' is one of the expressions which causes inversion.



Watch this video for more information:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xuyvwMKJn8U&feature=plcp>

<http://www.english-study.de/2010/08/21/grammar-quickie-inversion/> (explanation in German)

<http://esl.about.com/od/advancedgrammar/a/inversion.htm>

<http://www.fullspate.net/efl-advanced-grammar/>

Quizzes:

http://www.englishtenses.com/exercise/inversion_exercise

<http://www.tolearnenglish.com/exercises/exercise-english-2/exercise-english-83020.php>

<http://www.tolearnenglish.com/exercises/exercise-english-2/exercise-english-89063.php>

Unreal past

Jenny: It's time you **went**.

Tom: I'd sooner I **didn't**.

It's funny that both Jenny and Tom are using the form of the past tense but are not talking about the past.



In fact, we often use the form of the past tense in English even when we are not talking about the past. You probably already know that we use the past tense when making some conditional sentences:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkIPRUX5DhQ>



But there are also other cases in English where we use the form of the past tense to talk about the present or the future: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8k5w7sfshXE>

Here's a longer explanation with a short quiz at the end:

http://www.englishbaby.com/lessons/grammar/the_unreal_past

Now you should be ready to do a little test:

<http://www.flo-joe.co.uk/fce/students/strategy/transfrm/pasts.htm>

If you need C1, 80 points or more, search the internet for practice material for the CAE and IELTS exams. For example, after googling the words grammar and CAE, I found this link:

<http://www.flo-joe.co.uk/cae/students/tests/pt1index.htm>

The Use of English section gives you a good idea of the areas of grammar you need for C1.



2) Vocabulary

There are two important issues here.

- I. Changing the words you learn
- II. Changing the way you learn new words

I) Changing the words you learn

It might sound strange but you should stop learning words you don't know.

Instead, you should concentrate on turning your *passive* vocabulary into *active* vocabulary.

One of the simplest ways to do this is to keep your eye open for **collocations**.

A collocation¹ is two or more words that often go together. These combinations just sound "right" to native English speakers, who use them all the time. On the other hand, other combinations may be unnatural and just sound "wrong". For example, English speakers in German often say "Ich habe ein Bild genommen" because they are translating a collocation from English "to take a photo" directly into German, where it just sounds "wrong".



In general, collocations are easy to understand and therefore easy to learn if you take the trouble to do so.

So how good is your knowledge of collocations?

First learn more about them here:

<http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/collocations-samples.htm>

Now let's do a quick quiz:

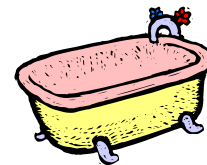
http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/quiznet/pdfs/109_common_collocations.pdf

Here some of the main types of collocations

i) Verb-noun collocations

Below you can see some potential verb-noun collocations with the verb *to run*. How many of them are correct in English?

To run + noun	Yes	No
Can you <i>run a car</i> ?		
Can you <i>run an experiment</i> ?		
Can you <i>run a bath</i> ?		
Can you <i>run a risk</i> ?		
Can you <i>run a company</i> ?		



Here are some more verb-noun collocations for you to test your knowledge:

- i. <http://www.flo-joe.co.uk/cae/students/strategy/openclze/pt2finalc.htm>
- ii. <http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/collocations-quiz-do-make.htm>

ii) Noun/adjective plus noun collocations

How many of the following are correct?

To run + noun	Yes	No
Can you have a <i>stop-gap solution</i> ?		
Can you have a <i>debatable point</i> ?		
Can you have a <i>frank discussion</i> ?		
Can you have a <i>vested interest</i> ?		

Test your knowledge here:

- i. <http://www.englishmedialab.com/cloze/Adjective%20noun%20collocation/index.html>

In fact, all of the combinations in the two tables above are correct.

¹ <http://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/collocations.htm> [accessed on 13 SEP 2010]

II) Changing the way you learn words

First stop using online dictionaries to look up new words.

There are numerous problems with this approach:

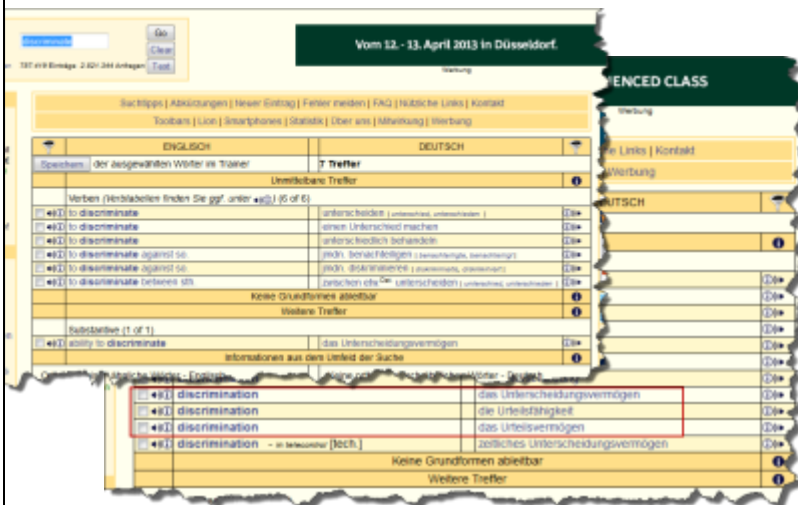


1) The words only go into your short-term memory

Like looking at your watch, you will have forgotten the word in a few seconds. Only your short-term memory is activated. It can be hard to remember words even a few seconds after you learnt them.

2) Without a context it's hard to pick the right translation

So what does it mean below when they define a connoisseur as someone with expert knowledge and keen **discrimination**? Check out leo.org and look for the correct translation. It's not the first one. It is tempting to take the first translation. However, the correct translation for the context is farther down the list: *Urteilsvermögen*



Try using Linguee.de instead. The sentences provide context and help you select the right translation.



3) Recording vocabulary

You should try and expand the information you record about words you want to learn. Many of you will have a *Vokabelheft*. But the

information tends to be limited to a simple translation, with no context to help understand the meaning of the word.

Try and fill in the missing information in the box below. The word you want to record is *churn*.

Where did you see the word? Copy in context.

Five ways to stop **employee churn**

Use it in a sentence		Synonym/antonym <i>Also known as employee turnover. Opposite is retention.</i>	
Verb/noun/adjective/adverb	Write word here Churn	Not to be confused with	
Definition (your own words) 1. <i>Number of employees who leave a company</i>		Translation	
Write related words here		Draw a picture of it	

3) Phrasal verbs

Understanding phrasal verbs

Verbs are often followed by adverbs or prepositions (= particles) such as *back, off, through, up* etc. Sometimes both verb and particle have their normal meaning:

*It took 20 minutes to **go through** passport control.*

Other times there is a new, often more abstract meaning when the verb and particle are put together:

*Can we **go through** those figures again? (= look carefully at/examine)*

Phrasal verbs are common in informal, spoken English. Quite often a phrasal verb will have a more formal, one-word equivalent which is used more in written English:

find out >>> discover

go on >>> continue

Often one phrasal verb can have several different meanings and the correct one is only clear from the situation:

*Don't worry, I'm **dealing with** it now. (= I'm taking the necessary action)*

*We **deal mainly with** Taiwanese companies. (= we do business with)*

*The report **deals with** our future strategy. (is about)*

Complete the following email using the phrasal verbs from the box (in the correct form) which mean the same as the words in brackets.

do without	look into	run out of	take up	call on	check in
hold on	look after	break down	turn up		

Hi Amanda

The service lift in the warehouse has (stopped working) again. Could you please get the Otis engineer to (investigate) what has gone wrong and to fix it ASAP? This is urgent because we really can't (manage if we don't have) it. We're having to move everything upstairs by hand and this is (occupying) a lot of time and pretty soon everyone is going to (have no more) patience.

We're expecting Mr Takashi from Japan sometime this afternoon. I have rung the hotel but he hasn't (registered his arrival) there yet, so he may just (arrive unexpectedly) at the office. If he does, could you (take care of) him and ask him to (wait) until I get back? I have to (visit) a client at about 2.30 pm but I should be back by 3.15 pm.

In the following sentences, choose the best option from the a-d.

1. The latest iPads are expensive, but if you wait, prices will down.
 - a. back
 - b. run
 - c. turn
 - d. come
2. I agree, and if they criticise you at the meeting, I will back you
 - a. up
 - b. down
 - c. in
 - d. out
3. By the way, I into Siti in York and she sends you her regards.
 - a. looked
 - b. turned
 - c. came
 - d. ran

4. Could you ring British Airways and find if there are any seats on the flight to Rome?
 - a. up
 - b. in
 - c. over
 - d. out
5. Work is always so much better if you have a boss you on with.
 - a. get
 - b. carry
 - c. take
 - d. hold

4) Idioms

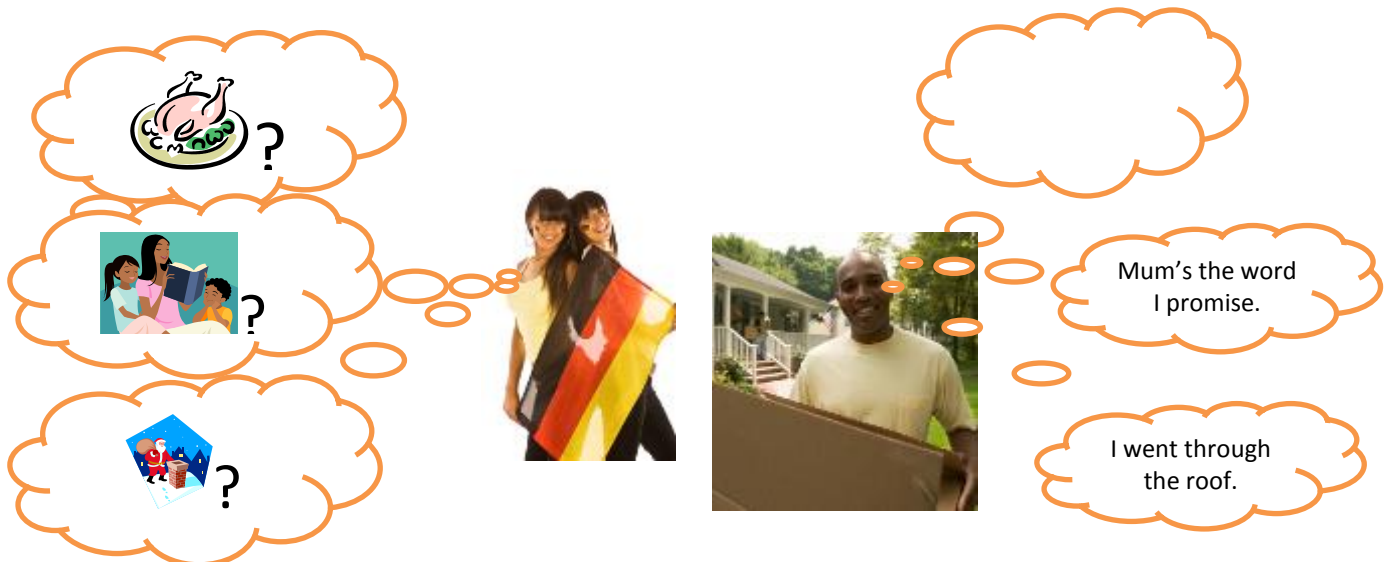


Balls? Churches? Cats? You can see how difficult these expressions would be for someone learning German. The English language, just like German and other languages, is also full of such idioms.

imagine how difficult these expressions would be for

What is an idiom?

We can see from the three German examples above that each expression has a meaning different than the combination of words would suggest. Native speakers use such idioms all the time, often without realising how hard they are for others to follow. This can make communication a confusing experience.



= He ate a lot because he promised that to his mother and now he is going to repair the roof.

Or does it? Search the internet. Try to find the meaning for those English idioms on the right.

You can read more about idioms here: <http://www.geo.de/GEOlino/mensch/redewendungen/englisch/englische-redewendungen-57051.html>

Here are some examples of idioms from YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xS1LGHjGXU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-564vFlwzs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPUccg9wC8s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nfjl7rIB3Yo> [This one is a little scary.]

Below you can see some other examples. Try and collect the idioms you come across in logical categories.

Time idioms	Vegetation idioms
Let's call it a day. He left on the dot of 6.00. She goes to bed in the early hours. We decided on the spur of the moment. Some good news can make my day. I like to arrive at the airport in good time. It was just one of those days. He'll be here in no time. She left the building in the nick of time.	to beat about the bush to sleep like a log to put something in a nutshell the last straw to turn over a new leaf to branch out to stem from to weed out to go against the grain
Number idioms	Shape idioms
½ to go halves 1 (go) back to square one 2 to be in two mind 4 on all fours 9 nine times out of ten 10 ten to one 19 nineteen to the dozen	a vicious circle to go round in circles to be all square to be in the right frame of mind to make ends meet to go to pieces to be at a (bit of a) loose end

You need to keep a record of any idioms you meet to expand your passive vocabulary. Then, in time, as you get more confident using English, you can build them into your active use.

Such idioms are very common in business English. On the right you can find an example.

Source: <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/oct/30/business/la-fi-buy-here-pay-here-part1-storyb>



The best strategy for recording idioms is shown below.

1. When you come across an example, copy out the whole sentence.
2. Get a translation from www.linguee.de



3. Get a definition from www.dictionary.com



5) Irony and sarcasm

The way the words are said can be more important than the words themselves.

Man: *Paula can't come.*

Woman: *Oh great.*

Often they will test your ability to understand the meaning behind the words. Someone saying *oh great* could be expressing satisfaction (I am so happy she can't come) but also annoyance (I'm angry she can't come) as in this case.

What is irony?

<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ironie>

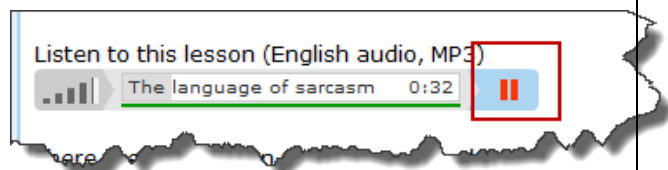
<http://theoatmeal.com/comics/irony>

Isn't it ironic?

<http://www.helping-you-learn-english.com/alanis-morissette.html>

Sarcasm

<http://www.english-test.net/stories/70/index.html> (click on the play button)



Listening

The problem is we never really hear everything. We think we do. But we don't. If someone said: *He works here in Wies.....* . Your brain would fill in *Wiesbaden* so fast they you might not even notice you didn't hear the complete word.

This works very well in our native language but we need to train our brain to do this in a foreign one. After all, listening is one of the four basic language skills. And it is one of the easiest skills to improve.

Here are two broad strategies for preparing for this part of the test:

- 1) Listen to more English in your everyday life
- 2) Practice exam-style questions

Making English part of your everyday life

You should try to make 30% of your life English – listening to English radio, watching English TV.

Podcasts

Nowadays, most of you will carry some means of playing music with you. If this device can play music you can also play podcasts.

Try the Stitcher App. Click on the graphic and follow the link.



Try the Filmon App. You can watch many English-language TV shows for free. If you have AppleTV you can even watch them on your television.



The BBC offers some great podcasts. Check out their site here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts>

Search under **genres** for the topics that interest you personally.

Some of the podcast are specially for learners of English such as:

- 1) [English at work](#)
- 2) [6 minute English](#)



The best thing to do is to [subscribe](#) to the podcast.

You can, of course, use iTunes, but there are other services available, such as [Juice](#) or [Stitcher](#).

Below, you will find a list of interesting podcasts from the BBC. Each of the graphics has a hyperlink that will take you to respective website if you hold down 'strg' and click on the left mouse button.



Here are three podcasts from NPR in America. Each of the pictures has a hyperlink that will take you to the website where you can subscribe to the podcast.



Movies

Simply watching movies in English is too passive.

A simple trick is to switch on the subtitles and compare what you are reading to what you are hearing.

This works well in all combinations.

1. Watch in German, subtitles in English.
2. Watch in English, subtitles in German.
3. Even watching in English with the subtitles in English works well, as the subtitles are never exactly the same as the text the actors are speaking.



Using exam preparation material

To really train your ear for exam-style questions you can search the internet for exam-preparation material.

There are many tests of English out there. Most of them have a listening component. Therefore, there are many free resources on the internet to help you get ready for such exams.

FCE LISTENING ACTIVITIES	
DESCRIBING PLACES Crowds and	HISTORIC MOMENTS Kennedy's Assassination
MONEY, MONEY Time for Presents	RELATIONSHIPS A Peculiar Family
HEALTH Afraid of Dentists?	EDUCATION Studying Abroad
INTERVIEWS Meg Buckner	SOCIETY Homeless Heroes
TRAVELS Two Female Writers	THE NEWS Crime and Politics

Here is one for the Cambridge First Certificate Exam, or FCE:

<http://www.ompersonal.com.ar/firstcertificate/contentidotematico.htm>



You can find a lot of material on YouTube.



For the FCE exam (B2)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mS2MITTyWe8>

For the IELTS exam (C1)

Episode 15: Listening for signpost words

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Or1Tzn3UqV0>

Episode 16: Listening for numbers

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqS8SZD6gIs&NR=1>

