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Advanced Grammar for IELTS: Modal verbs (1): can, could, may, might, be able to – Diagnose Test, Grammar Explanation & Practice Exercises

A DIAGNOSTIC TEST: Modal verbs (1): can, could, may, might, be able to

Fifteen of the sentences below contain mistakes with modal verbs. Tick (✓) the correct sentences, then find and correct the mistakes.

We took an exam yesterday and I couldn't answer any of the questions. ✓

I ~~could be~~ promoted last year but I preferred to stay on the shop floor. ==> could have been

- 1 When I finish the course next year I can speak perfect French
- 2 You'll have to call a cab. I can't have been able to drive since I broke my arm last June.
- 3 This computer is so simple that it is able to be operated by anyone.
- 4 The job interview was a disaster; I could only answer half the questions!
- 5 When she was riding in the woods last week, Helen fell off her horse but luckily she could get back on and ride home.
- 6 It's really annoying. Surely you knew they didn't accept traveller's cheques at that hotel. You could warn me before I left!
- 7 These days she is rather slow but as a child she could run like the wind.
- 8 What an excellent choice of restaurant. I can't have chosen better if I'd made the reservation myself!
- 9 There can be life on Saturn.
- 10 My father could be a star in the 1980s, it's a pity that he never really tried.
- 11 Watching TV soaps can become very addictive
- 12 Jane's late. She can be stuck in a traffic jam.
- 13 A new car! What can she be thinking of!

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- 14 I heard your sales results were excellent. May you get a bonus this year?
- 15 Don't get too anxious; there may well be a simple explanation for it.
- 16 Don't bother replying as I may have changed address by the time you read this.
- 17 Steve couldn't steal it. I'm sure he was at home all week.
- 18 Elizabeth can get better results if she paid more attention to her homework.
- 19 I'll be able to meet you after the lesson.
- 20 I'm not sure about tomorrow night. I may be on call.
- 21 Excuse me. Am I able to use your phone?
- 22 Well, don't worry. You could always try again tomorrow.
- 23 I could leave work early yesterday – my boss gave me permission.
- 24 You might get me some bin liners if it's not too much trouble.
- 25 People might not smoke on British Airways flights; it's forbidden.

B GRAMMAR EXPLANATION: Modal verbs (1): *can, could, may, might, be able to*

Modal verbs *can* be confusing for learners because individual modal forms *can* be used to express a number of different meanings. This unit looks at the modals we use to describe ability and possibility, to make deductions, arrangements, suggestions and offers, and to ask for and give permission.

1. ABILITY

1A. Present and future

We use *can* to describe an ability and *cannot* or *can't* to describe a lack of ability in the present: *She can speak Spanish but she can't speak Italian.*

If the present ability is surprising or involves overcoming some difficulty, we *can* also use *is / are able to*:

Despite his handicap he is able to drive a car.

Note: We *cannot* usually use *be able to* with a passive:

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~~X This book is able to be used by complete beginners.~~

✓ This book can be used by complete beginners.

To emphasise the difficulty or to suggest a great effort (in the present, past or future) we use *manage to*. In more formal English we can also use *succeed in + -ing* form:

Do you think she'll manage to get a visa?

The army succeeded in defeating their enemy.

To describe a future ability we use *will be able to*, not *can*:

~~X Can I speak fluently by the end of the course?~~

✓ Will I be able to speak fluently by the end of the course?

We also use *be able to* where *can/could* is grammatically impossible, for example:

I haven't been able to drive since I dislocated my wrist. (with the perfect aspect)

We love being able to talk the local language. (with *-ing* forms and infinitives)

Another form for *not be able to* is *be unable to*. It is more common in formal English:

The lawyer was unable to persuade the jury of her client's innocence.

We use *can* (present) and *could* (past) before sense verbs.

I think I can smell something burning in the kitchen.

1B. Past

We use *could* to describe the possession of an ability in the past:

Past Mozart could play the piano at the age of five.

Note: To describe the successful use of an ability on a specific occasion we do not use *could*, we use a past tense or *was / were able to*:

~~X Mike's car broke down but fortunately he could repair it.~~

✓ Mike's car broke down but fortunately he was able to repair it.

But we can use *could* in questions, and in sentences with limiting adverbs such as *only* or *hardly*:

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Could you fix the computer yourself? 'No, I could only back up the key files.'

She was so exhausted she could hardly speak.

We use *couldn't* or *was / were not able to* to describe a lack of ability or success:

Mozart couldn't speak French.

Despite being a mechanic, Mike couldn't fix his car when it broke down yesterday.

We use *could/ might have* + past participle to describe a past ability which wasn't used or a past opportunity which wasn't taken. The meaning is similar to '*would have been able to*'

She could have paid by credit card but she preferred to use cash. (= She had the ability to pay by credit card but she didn't use it.)

I might have gone to university after leaving school but I chose to get a job instead. (= I had the opportunity to go, but I didn't take it.)

We often use these forms to make a criticism:

You might/ could have told me about the party! (= You had the chance to tell me but you didn't.)

We can use *couldn't have* + past participle + comparative adjective when we want to emphasise a past action or feeling:

They couldn't have tried harder to make me feel welcome. (= They tried very hard.)

I couldn't have been more pleased when I heard about your results – congratulations! (= I was very pleased.)

2. POSSIBILITY, DEDUCTION AND SPECULATION

2A. Present

We use *can* to describe things which are generally possible (we know they sometimes happen):

Drinks in restaurants can be very expensive. (= Drinks are sometimes expensive.)

In scientific and academic English we use *may* in the same way:

Over-prescribing of antibiotics may lead to the rapid development of resistant strains.

To talk about specific possibilities we use *may, might* and *could* (but not *can*). The meaning is similar to 'perhaps' or 'maybe':

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X ~~There can be life on Mars.~~

✓ *There may be life on Mars.* (= Perhaps there is life on Mars.)

The rash could be a symptom of something more serious. (= Maybe it is a symptom ...)

We use the same forms when we are making a deduction based on evidence or on our experience:

He always wears smart suits. He could be a businessman.

'Why isn't she here yet?' 'I don't know. The train may be running late.'

We can use *well* after *may*, *might* and *could* if we think the possibility is quite strong. (If we are very certain of the possibility, we use *must*)

Don't worry, the contract could well be in the post. (= It is probably in the post.)

To describe possibilities which depend on certain conditions we use *could* or *might*:

She could learn much more quickly if she paid attention. (= *She would be able to learn more quickly if she paid attention.*)

We use *can* or *could* (but not *may*) to talk about specific possibilities in *wh-* questions or with adverbs such as *only* or *hardly*.

X ~~Who may that be at this time of night?~~

✓ *Who can/could that be at this time of night?*

Where can/could that noise be coming from?

It can/could hardly be the postman, he only comes in the morning.

It can/could only be Steve. He's the only one with a key.

We use *might* for a more tentative (less direct) question:

Might the losses be due to currency fluctuations?

We use *can't* or *couldn't* for things which we know are impossible and to make negative deductions:

You can't get blood out of a stone. (I'm sure about this, it's impossible.)

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He couldn't be a doctor, he isn't wearing a white coat. (I'm certain he isn't ...)

We also use this form to say that something is impossible because we are unwilling to do it:

I couldn't pick up a spider; they terrify me.

When we think that something is possibly not the case we use *might not* or *may not*:

The shops may not/ might not be open today; it's a bank holiday. (Perhaps they are not open.)

Note: In spoken English we often contract *might not* to *mightn't*. We don't usually contract *maynot*.

2B. Past

We use *could* to talk about general possibility in the past (things which sometimes happened):

Teachers could be very strict at my old school. (Sometimes they were strict.)

In scientific and academic English we use *might* in the same way:

Wealthy Victorian families might keep as many as a dozen indoor servants.

We use *could/might have* for a specific past possibility:

She might have done it; she had the opportunity and the motive. (Perhaps she did it ...)

John could have posted the letter. (I'm not sure whether he did or not.)

We also use *might have* for a past opportunity which we know was not taken .

I might have gone to drama school, but my parents wouldn't let me. (I had the opportunity but I didn't go.)

We express a negative deduction about the past with *can't have* or *couldn't have*:

She can't have fixed the computer, it's still not working properly. (I'm sure she didn't fix it.)

When we are less certain we use *may not have* or *might not have*.

We'd better phone them, they might not have heard the news. (Perhaps they haven't heard the news yet.)

We often use *can't have* or *couldn't have* to express surprise or disbelief:

She couldn't have done it; she's such a nice woman.

2C. Future

If we are certain that something will be possible or impossible in the future we can use *will* / *won't be able to*:

We 'll be able to travel to the moon, but we won't be able to travel to Mars.

For predictions which are less certain we use *may*, *might* or *could*. *Could* usually describes a weaker possibility than *may* or *might*:

The directors may call a stockholders' meeting. (Perhaps they will call a meeting.)

You never know, she could meet someone suitable tomorrow. (It's possible, but unlikely.)

We sometimes use *may/might have* + past participle to talk about a possible completed action by a time in the future :

Call me next Tuesday; I might have finished the project by then.

3. ARRANGEMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, OFFERS, ETC.

3A. Arrangements

We use *can*, *could* or *be able to* to describe possible arrangements for a time in the future:

The doctor could see you at six; he can't see you before then as he's too busy.

I'll be able to see you after the lesson.

If the arrangement is uncertain we use *may* or *might*:

The dentist might be free to see you immediately after lunch; I'll have to check the diary.

I'm not sure if I'm available; I may be working that weekend.

3B. Suggestions, offers and requests

The choice of modal verb for suggestions, offers and requests depends on the formality of the situation. *May* and *might* tend to be more formal and tentative than *can* and *could*:

Less formal	Offers	Requests	Suggestions
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More formal	Can I help you?	Can you close the window?	We can try that new cafe.
	We could do that for you.	Could you pass me the salt?	You could lose some weight.
	May I help you?	You might get me some milk while you're there.	You might give John a ring.
	Might I be of some assistance?		

We use *can/ could* always for an alternative or more tentative suggestion:

We could always go to the Italian place.

When we want to make a suggestion with the meaning 'there is no better choice available', we *can* use the phrase *might as well*:

Now the children have left we might as well sell the house and get something smaller.

4. ASKING FOR AND GIVING /REFUSING PERMISSION

4A. Present / Future

We use *can/can't* for permission granted or refused by the person being asked and for permission subject to some external authority such as the law:

'*Can I use your phone?*' 'Yes, of course you can./No. I'm afraid you can't.' (I give/refuse permission.)

You can't smoke on the underground. (The law doesn't allow you to do this.)

In more formal situations we can use *may* and *may not* in the same way:

May I interrupt?

Candidates may not bring calculators into the examination room.

We use *could* or *might* to ask for permission in a more tentative way (*might* is very formal):

Excuse me, could I leave my coat here?

Might I ask the court for an adjournment at this point?

4B. Past

To describe general permission in the past we use *could/couldn't*:

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In the 1950s British children could leave school at the age of fourteen.

But to talk about permission on a specific occasion in the past, we do not use *could*, we use *was /were allowed to*:

X ~~*I could leave early yesterday.*~~

✓ *I was allowed to leave early yesterday.*

C PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

Choose a suitable form of *can, could, be able to, manage to or succeed in* to complete the sentences below.

- 1 The manager of the shop was a bit reluctant but in the end I _____ get a refund.
- 2 It was really annoying; I _____ get on to any of the websites you recommended.
- 3 What's her phone number? I _____ remember it.
- 4 Although Stephanie is deaf and mute she _____ communicate with the aid of a special computer.
- 5 They finish the new motorway next month so we _____ get to the coast much more quickly.
- 6 Most of the big hotels were full, but we _____ find a room in one of those small guesthouses near the station.
- 7 Would you speak more slowly? I _____ follow what you're saying.
- 8 I really appreciate _____ speak to you so frankly about this.
- 9 After I move to the country I'm not going to _____ visit you so often.
- 10 Over the last few months the government's fuel tax levy _____ generating over a billion pounds in revenue.
- 11 This new mobile phone is fantastic. It _____ be used anywhere in the world.
- 12 The shopping channel is a real boon for Liz; she adores _____ buy clothes at any time of day or night!

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13 I _____ walk properly since I had that skiing accident.

14 Sadly, many of the indigenous people _____ resist the diseases brought by the European settlers.

15 The non-fiction section _____ be found on the third floor of the library.

Q 2.

Match the situations (A-D) with the sentences (1-4).

A Samantha is going to work at a ticket agency next year.

B Judy went to the theatre yesterday and told the box office clerk that she was a theatre critic.

C Liz went to the theatre yesterday to buy some tickets. They didn't tell her about the special 'free ticket' offer.

D Carol works at a ticket agency.

1. She was able to get free tickets.
2. She can get free tickets.
3. She will be able to get free tickets.
4. She could have got free tickets.

Q 3.

Match the two parts (1-4 and A-D) to form sentences.

1. He could do it

A he had plenty of opportunity.

2. He couldn't do it

B he wasn't even in the country.

3. He might have done it

C he seems a very capable person.

4. He can't have done it

D he doesn't look old enough.

Q 4.

Finish each of the following sentences in such a way that it is as similar as possible in meaning to the sentence printed before it. You must use a suitable form of *can*, *could*, *may* or *might* in each sentence. The exercise begins with an example (0).

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0 I was absolutely thrilled when I heard about your engagement.

==> ***I couldn't have been more thrilled when I heard about your engagement.***

1. I'm very angry with you – you knew I was having problems with the car and you didn't bother to help me!

You
.....

2. Twenty years ago my neighbour offered me his apartment for \$30,000 but I didn't buy it.

Twenty years ago I
.....

3. It would be possible for us to issue the tickets today if you gave us your credit card number.

We
.....

4. The service in British restaurants is sometimes quite surly.

The service
.....

5. Might the disparity in the figures be due to a computer error?

Is it
.....

6. Don't worry, they'll probably be on the next train.

They
.....

7. I'm certain he isn't responsible for the error; he looks too experienced.

He
.....

8. Perhaps the shuttle bus isn't working at the moment – it is the low season.

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The shuttle bus

.....

9. It's so annoying. You knew their phone number but you didn't give it to me!

You

.....

10. I'm afraid it isn't possible to grow bananas in the British climate.

Unfortunately, you

.....

11. Given some luck, our team has a good chance of winning the championship next month.

With any luck

.....

12. Perhaps Jim took it; he was in the office all day yesterday.

Jim

.....

13. It's possible that the results will have arrived by tomorrow lunchtime.

The results

.....

14. Who do you think is making all that noise next door?

Who

.....

15. Perhaps there are other intelligent life-forms in the universe.

There

.....

16. Thanks to satellite technology, it is now possible to predict hurricanes quite accurately.

We

.....

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17. The lights are off so maybe he isn't at home.

He
.....

18. With a little bit of luck my sister has the potential to be a huge star.

My sister
.....

19. They offered Carrie a job in New York, but she didn't want to work there.

Carrie
.....

20. I would never be able to live in a house without a garden.

I
.....

Q 5.

Complete the following article by writing the missing words. Use no more than two words for each space. The exercise begins with an example (0).

The worst experience of my life? I (0)*can*.... remember it as if it were yesterday.

I was staying at a beautiful hotel on the coast. My room was on the second floor. It was about two o'clock on my first night when I suddenly woke up. There was a very strong smell of burning but I (1)..... tell where it was coming from. I jumped out of bed, ran to the door and opened it. I (2) see smoke coming from the staircase. I suppose I (3) tried to run down the stairs, but I knew I wouldn't have made it. It was impossible, the smoke was too dense, I (4) got further than the first landing before choking.

I went back into my room, slammed the door behind me and ran to the window. I had to escape. I (5) jumped out of the window but I felt too scared. It was too high, I needed something to climb down. Suddenly I had a brainwave and ran over to the bed. By tying the bedsheets together I (6) make a kind of ladder. I tied one end of the sheets to the foot of the bed and I threw the other end out of the opened window. Despite my fear of heights I (7) climb out onto the window ledge. A small group of people had gathered on the ground and were shouting encouragement to me.

‘Come on,’ they said, ‘you (8) do it!’ I was shaking with fear, but by refusing to look down and concentrating on the rope in my hands I eventually (9) lowering myself from the ledge. Very slowly, putting one hand below the other, I (10) climb down the bedsheet rope to safety.

Q 6.

Choose the correct description, A or B.

1. They allowed me to bring my dog.
A They usually allow dogs.
B They don’t usually allow dogs.
2. The doctor could see you at eleven.
A I’m not sure if she’s free at eleven.
B I’m suggesting a time for an appointment.
3. Might I borrow your calculator for a moment?
A Talking to your best friend.
B Talking to a clerk at the bank.
4. Well, we could always go on the bus.
A I don’t really mind how we get there.
B I really want to go on the bus.
5. I could wear anything I liked.
A When I worked as a secretary.
B On the day I took my secretarial exams.
6. We can have a look at the shops.
A I’m making a suggestion.
B I’m describing a future ability.

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7. May I interrupt?

A At a formal business meeting.

B At a family lunch.

8. You may not bring drinks into the auditorium during the performance.

A It's up to you to decide.

B It's forbidden.

9. I might see you after the show.

A I probably will see you.

B I'm not sure if I'll see you or not.

10. We might as well go straight home.

A There's nothing better to do.

B I really want to go home.

Q 7.

Fill the gaps in the dialogue using a suitable form of can, could, may, might, be able to, manage to or succeed in and a form of the verb in brackets. The exercise begins with an example (0).

MIKE So how are the wedding arrangements going, Jane?

JANE Not too bad. We're seeing the vicar tomorrow so Harry and I (0) **will be able to ask** (ask) him about hiring the church hall for the reception.

MIKE It would be great if you (1)..... (get) that place, it's an ideal venue.

JANE Yes, I know. Although it (2) (be) a bit too small if all our friends turn up!

MIKE It holds about a hundred people, doesn't it?

JANE Well, in fact it (3) (accommodate) up to a hundred and twenty-five, apparently. But there are about a hundred and forty on our guest list. It's a bit of a Catch-22 situation because I (4) (not/invite) people until the reception is organised, but I (5) (not/organise) a venue until I know how many people are coming!

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MIKE Some of Harry's cousins live in the States, don't they?

JANE Yes. I'm not sure if they're coming. It's quite an expensive trip so they (6) (not/make) it over here. But I'm hoping at least some of them will come.

MIKE They (7) (always/get) one of those cheap charter flights. I've seen a lot of them advertised on the Internet recently.

JANE Oh, I think Harry (8) (tell) them about that already. He said he'd sent them some Internet links.

MIKE What about catering? Have you made any plans yet?

JANE I've arranged something with Quality Caterers in the High Street.

MIKE Oh, I wish I'd known that before! I (9) (speak) to Liz Brown for you when I saw her last Tuesday. She's the manager there and she goes to the same tennis club as me. You never know, I (10) (even/get) you a discount!

JANE That's a pity. Still, they've given us a pretty good deal. By the way, Mike, there is one favour I wanted to ask you.

MIKE Sure. What is it?

JANE (11) (we/borrow) your video camera?

MIKE Of course. You (12) (have) the tripod as well, if you like.

JANE Harry dropped his camera when we were in Tenerife. And since we've been back he (13) (not/find) anyone around here to fix it.

MIKE What about music at the reception? Are you going to get a band?

JANE No, we (14) (not/have) live music at the church hall, it doesn't have a licence. But we (15) (have) a disco.

MIKE You (16) (always/ask) Jackie Branson, she's got one of those mobile disco things.

JANE I didn't know that! I (17) (speak) to her about it yesterday – she was at my aerobics class. I thought she'd given up disc-jockeying ages ago.

MIKE Well. I suppose she (18) (give/it/up) when the kids were very young, but I'm pretty sure she's back doing it now.

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JANE I expect she'll be at the aerobics class next week; so I (19) (ask) her about it then. Oh, that reminds me. Harry wondered why you weren't at football practice on Wednesday.

MIKE It's that awful car of mine – it just wouldn't start on Wednesday. Luckily, Jim down the road (20) (fix) it, although it took him two hours!

D ANSWER KEY FOR DIAGNOSTIC TEST

- 1 ~~can~~ ==> will be able to
- 2 ~~can't have been able~~ ==> haven't been able
- 3 ~~is able to be~~ ==> can be
- 4 ✓
- 5 ~~could~~ ==> was able to
- 6 ~~could warn~~ ==> could have warned
- 7 ✓
- 8 ~~can't~~ ==> couldn't
- 9 ~~can~~ ==> may/might/could
- 10 ~~could be~~ ==> could have been
- 11 ✓
- 12 ~~can~~ ==> could/may/might
- 13 ✓
- 14 ~~May you get~~ ==> Could/Might you get/ Is it possible you will get
- 15 ✓
- 16 ✓
- 17 ~~couldn't steal~~ ==> couldn't have stolen
- 18 ~~can~~ ==> could/might
- 19 ✓

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- 20 ✓
- 21 ~~Am I able to use~~ ==> Can/Could/May/Might I use
- 22 ✓
- 23 ~~could~~ ==> was able to
- 24 ✓
- 25 ~~might not~~ ==> may not/can't

E ANSWER KEY FOR PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

1 managed to	6 were able to/managed to	11 can
2 couldn't/ wasn't able to	7 can't	12 being able to
3 can't	8 being able to	13 haven't been able to
4 is able to/can	9 be able to	14 were unable to/ weren't able to/ didn't manage to
5 will be able to	10 has succeeded in	15 can

Q 2.

A 3 B 1 C 4 D 2

Q 3.

1 C 2 D 3 A 4 B

Q 4.

1 You could/might have helped me (with the car)!

2 Twenty years ago I could/might have bought that apartment for \$30,000.

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- 3 We could issue the tickets today if you gave us your credit card number.
- 4 The service in British restaurants can be quite surly.
- 5 Is it possible that the disparity in the figures is due to a computer error?
- 6 They could/might/may (well) be on the next train.
- 7 He can't/couldn't be responsible for the error; he looks too experienced.
- 8 The shuttle bus might/may not be working at the moment ...
- 9 You could/might have given me their phone number!
- 10 Unfortunately, you can't grow bananas in the British climate.
- 11 With any luck our team could/might win the championship next year.
- 12 Jim might/could have taken it...
- 13 The results may/might have arrived by tomorrow lunchtime.
- 14 Who can/could be making all that noise next door?
- 15 There may/could/might be other intelligent life-forms in the universe.
- 16 We can now/are now able to predict hurricanes quite accurately thanks to satellite technology.
- 17 He may/might not be at home; the lights are off.
- 18 My sister could/might be a huge star with a little bit of luck.
- 19 Carrie could/might have worked in New York ...
- 20 I couldn't/could never live in a house without a garden.

Q 5.

- 1 couldn't
- 2 could
- 3 could have/might have
- 4 couldn't have/wouldn't have

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5 could have/might have/may have

6 was able to/managed to

7 was able to/managed to

8 can

9 succeeded in

10 managed to/was able to

Q 6.

1 B 2 B 3 B 4 A 5 A

6 A 7 A 8 B 9 B 10 A

Q 7.

1 could get/were able to get/managed to get	11 Could/Can we borrow
2 might be/may be/could be	12 can/could have
3 can accommodate	13 hasn't been able to find
4 can't invite	14 can't have
5 can't organise	15 can have
6 might/may not make	16 could always ask
7 could always get	17 could have spoken
8 might/may have told	18 might/could have given it up
9 could have spoken	19 will be able to ask/can ask/could ask
10 might even have got	20 was able to fix/managed to fix

Advanced Grammar for IELTS: Modal verbs (2): *must, should, ought to, have to, need to* – Diagnose Test, Grammar Explanation & Practice Exercises

A DIAGNOSTIC TEST: Modal verbs (2): *must, should, ought to, have to, need to*

Underline the best choice of word(s) in **bold** in each of these sentences.

Example:

As they get older, teenagers **should/ had better** be treated more like adults.

- 1 To **must/ Having to** listen to hip-hop music all evening is my idea of torture!
- 2 The landlord **ought to/ ought** have taken his responsibilities more seriously.
- 3 This company is awful to work for. We **must / have to** account for every minute of the day.
- 4 Do you know if we **must/ have to** have visas for the Caribbean?
- 5 The newspaper **shouldn't have/ mustn't have** printed the rumour without concrete evidence.
- 6 What a state my shoes are in! They **need/ must** repairing.
- 7 We **have to/ are supposed to** put our bags in the lockers, but most people take them into the gym.
- 8 We **couldn't go/ mustn't have gone** into the disco because we were too young.
- 9 Polite notice: children **do not have to/ are not allowed** to play on the grass.
- 10 This offer is not open to current employees. Participants **must not have/ need not have** been employed by the company in the last four years.
- 11 We **needn't / needn't** to have booked the tickets in advance; there were plenty left.
- 12 With our new range of hair products, you **mustn't/don't have to** spend hours caring for your hair.

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13 There wasn't anyone on the nightclub door so we **didn't need to show / needn't have shown** proof of our age.

14 As we're getting a lodger, we'd **better / better to** have some more keys cut.

15 Our advice is that even people as young as twenty-five **should / must** consider a personal pension.

16 You **won't have to/ had better not** tell Shirley what you saw – it will only upset her and she'll blame you.

17 The ground's soaking outside – it **must raining/ be raining** quite heavily.

18 If you bring your receipt, there **shouldn't/ mustn't** be any difficulty with a refund.

19 Lewis **must have/ should have** been training very hard to develop muscles like that!

20 I walked into the showroom and saw the car, and I knew I **had to have / must have** had it.

B GRAMMAR EXPLANATION: Modal verbs (2): *must, should, ought to, have to, need to*

English has a number of different ways of expressing the concepts of obligation and necessity, prohibition, recommendation and logical deduction. This unit looks at the different modal verbs, as well as some common non-modal verbs and phrases, which we use to express these concepts.

1. OBLIGATION AND NECESSITY

1A. Form

	must	have (got) to	need to	should/ ought to
present	must	has/ have (got) to	need / needs to	should/ ought to
Past	had to	had (got) to	needed to	should/ ought to have (done)
future	must	will have to	will need to	should/ ought to

Must, should and *ought to* are modal verbs (unlike *need to* and *have to*). They do not change form in the present tense, nor do they have a past tense or a future form with *will*, nor infinitive

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or participle forms. As an alternative to *must* or when we can't use *must* (e.g. to refer to the past), we usually use *have to*:

- Past: *The staff and students at the university had to evacuate the campus.*
- Future: *The Council must/ will have to find ways of cutting costs next year.*
- Infinitive: *It's difficult to have to stand by and watch your child in pain.*
- Participle: *Having to listen to hip-hop music all evening is my idea of torture!*

We can express a past meaning of *should* and *ought to* by using a modal perfect:

They really should/ ought to have consulted their shareholders first.

Need can be used as a modal verb (without *to*), usually in negatives and questions:

Need you shout so? I'm right next to you!

We needn't bother making the bed. The maid will do it.

As an alternative to *need*, we can use *need to* or *have to*:

Do you need to/ have to shout so?

We don't need to/ I have to bother making the bed.

We can use *must*, *have to* and *need to* with a passive phrase:

Democracy must/ has to be seen to work.

Pulses need to be cooked thoroughly to eradicate the toxins in them.

1 B. Obligation

We usually express obligation in English with *must* or *have to*:

You must arrive in good time for the meeting tomorrow. The MD will be there.

Everyone has to register their name and address in order to be able to vote.

The difference in meaning between *have to* and *must* can be fine and often depends on whether or not the speaker sees the obligation as one they are imposing. We use *have to* to express an obligation we see as outside our control, e.g. rules imposed by an authority:

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Students have to wear school uniforms in the sixth form.

We often use *must* to express an obligation imposed by the speaker:

I must get up earlier – I waste so much time in the mornings.

Must is commonly used for the following situations:

- To give a strong personal opinion: *I believe people must vote at elections.*
- To impose an obligation on oneself: *I really must lose some weight.*
- To give instructions: *The electricity must always be switched off before repairs are attempted.* (In giving instructions, *must* is often used with a passive verb.)

Note: However, *must* expresses a strong obligation and we do not often use it in face-to-face conversation as it can seem impolite and often inappropriate.

We often use *should* and *ought to* as an alternative to *must* as they express a subjective (often moral) obligation felt by the speaker, but the obligation is weaker than with *must*:

You should treat your neighbours with more respect.

It is possible to use *need to* to express external obligation, particularly in the future:

We'll need to get our visas sorted out or we won't be able to stop over in the States.

We use *have got to* for external obligation like *have to*. but it is more informal than *have to* and more common in speech than in writing (*have got to* is rare in US English):

What time have we got to be at the airport tomorrow?

[Claim forms have got to be date-stamped before payment will be made.]

✓ *Claim forms have to be date-stamped before payment will be made.*

We use *should/ought to* + *have* + past participle for an unfulfilled obligation in the past:

You really should have/ought to have registered before term started.

The record was finally released eighteen months later than it should have been

1C. Necessity

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We can use *need to*, *must* and *have to* to express necessity (i.e. a requirement that results from things other than just commands, rules or laws):

All living beings need to/ must/ have to take in sustenance in order to live.

I really need to/ must/ have to get some more sleep. I 'm always exhausted.

Note: It is possible, though quite rare today, to use *need* without *to* in questions:

Need he really play his music so loudly?

If we want to express a necessity without suggesting who should deal with it, we can use *need* + *-ing* form:

That poor bird – his cage really needs cleaning

This use has a passive meaning and is similar to the passive infinitive:

That poor bird – his cage really needs to be cleaned.

1D. Other ways of expressing obligation

We can use *be to* for an order from a person in authority:

The members of the jury are to report to the judge's chambers.

We use *be obliged to* (US: *obligated to*) or *required to* in formal contexts:

We're obliged to contribute twenty-five per cent of the costs of the repairs.

Motorists are required by law to wear seat belts in the European Union.

We use *be supposed to* for a lesser obligation and one that is frequently ignored:

We're supposed to leave our textbooks at school, but we often take them home.

We use *be liable to* for obligation (often in a legal context):

Anyone causing damage will be liable to pay for all necessary repairs.

2. PROHIBITION AND CRITICISM

2A. Forms

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	must not	cannot	other forms	should not/ought not to
present	mustn't (have)	can't	may not is / are not allowed to	shouldn't oughtn't to
Past		couldn't	was/ were not allowed to	shouldn't have (done) oughtn't to have (done)
future	mustn't	cannot	may not will not be allowed to	shouldn't oughtn't to

2B. Meaning and use

We use *must not* (usually *mustn't*) to express a prohibition (an obligation not to do something) imposed by the speaker or writer:

You mustn't touch that kettle. It's hot!

To express a weaker, often moral prohibition, we use *shouldn't* or *oughtn't to*:

You really shouldn't/oughtn't to speak to your mother like that!

We tend to use *shouldn't* more often than *oughtn't to*.

To express prohibition by an external authority we often use other modal verbs or non-modal expressions. *Mustn't* may appear too strong in these situations:

Guests may not use the pool after 11 p.m. (formal)

Women can't/ aren't allowed to drive in some Arab countries.

Note: It is possible, though not common, to use *must not have* + past participle for a present prohibition which relates to the past:

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Entrants must be aged 16 to 25 and must not have done any professional modelling. (The modelling is in the past, but the prohibition is in the present.)

We use *couldn't* or *wasn't / weren't allowed to* for prohibition in the past:

We couldn't go into the disco because we were too young.

Journalists were shown the disused buildings but they weren't allowed to enter them.

We use *shouldn't / ought not to have* + past participle to criticise a past action:

You shouldn't have driven through that red light. You could have caused an accident.

We usually use *won't be allowed to* or *can't* to express prohibition in the future:

Let's eat before we go. We won't be allowed to/can't take food into the auditorium.

3. ABSENCE OF OBLIGATION OR NECESSITY

3A. Forms

	not have to	need not
present	do/does not have to	need not do/ does not need to
Past	did not have to	did not need to need not have (done)
future	will not have to	will not need to, need not

3B. Meaning and use

We usually use *don't have to / don't need to* to express a lack of external obligation:

~~*X You mustn't pay to visit most museums in Britain.*~~

✓ *You don't have I need to pay to visit most museums in Britain.* (Entrance is free.)

We use *don't need to / needn't* for absence of necessity felt by the speaker. *Needn't* tends to express the speaker's personal opinion more:

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We needn't/ don't need to put the heating on yet; it's not cold enough.

We use *didn't have to/ didn't need to* for absence of obligation in the past:

You didn't have to/ didn't need to finish the washing-up. I could have done it.

Note: *Need* has two past forms: *didn't need to* and *needn't have done*. We use *didn't need to* when we don't know if the action happened or not:

We didn't need to take warm sweaters, as the weather was so good. (We don't know if the speaker took warm sweaters or not.)

We use *needn't have* + past participle when the action happened but was unnecessary:

We needn't have taken warm sweaters. We could have used the space in our luggage for more books! (We know that the speaker took warm sweaters.)

We use *won't have to, won't need to* or *needn't* for absence of obligation in the future:

With one of the new generation of food processors, cooks won't have to/ I won't need to/ needn't peel or chop any more.

4. RECOMMENDATION AND ADVICE

4A. Forms

	Must	should	ought to	had better
present	must (not)	should (not)	ought (not) to	had better (not)
future	must (not)	should (not)	ought (not) to	had better (not)

4B. Meaning and use

We use *must* for strong recommendations and advice:

You really must read Sebastian Faulks's latest book. It's stunning!

You must do something about that cough. Please go and see the doctor.

Note that with this use *must* is usually heavily stressed in speech.

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Recommendation or advice with *should* or *ought to* is less emphatic:

Even people as young as twenty-five should consider a personal pension.

Children ought not to spend long periods in front of a computer screen.

We often use *should* and *ought to* with the passive:

The underlying shift in public opinion ought not to be exaggerated.

Had better (not) expresses the best thing to do in a particular situation. It often has a sense of urgency and can be a warning or a threat:

If the burglars took your keys, you'd better change the locks in case they come back.

Your dog had better not dig up my rose bush again!

5. LOGICAL DEDUCTION AND PROBABILITY

5A. Forms

	Must	have (got) to	should
present	must (not)	have (got) to	should (not)
past	must have + past participle	have (got) to	should (not) have + past participle
future	must (not)	have (got) to	should (not)

In this sense, we can also use *must*, *have to* and *should* with the continuous:

That disco is so loud. You must be damaging your ears when you go there.

You have got to be joking! That was not a foul!

The accused should not have been driving at 80 in a built-up area.

5B. Meaning and use

We use *must* for something that we believe to be true because of evidence (i.e. we are making a logical deduction):

This must be the place – it's the only restaurant in the street.

I thought the eclipse was today, but it must be happening tomorrow.

The opposite of *must* in this sense is *can't*, not *mustn't* :

This can't be the place – there's no one inside and there are no lights on.

It is possible to use 'have (got) to' for emphatic logical deduction:

There has (got) to be some mistake. I didn't order this furniture.

We use 'must have' + past participle to express a logical deduction about the past:

There was a terrific noise last night. It must have been an explosion.

I couldn't wake you this morning. You must have been sleeping really soundly.

The negative of this is 'can't/couldn't have' + past participle.

Note the difference between the two past forms 'must have' + past participle and 'had to'.

The Corrs' new single has been played non-stop. You must have heard it! (deduction)

I've always loved The Corrs and when I heard they had a new single out, I had to hear it! (obligation imposed by the speaker)

We use *should/ ought to* for probability and *shouldn't /ought not to* for improbability. We believe the statement to be true because of our prior knowledge, experience or present evidence:

The plane should be landing about now.

There shouldn't be problems with traffic at that time of the evening.

Note: We rarely use *should* to 'predict' a negative (unpleasant) situation. Instead we use *will*:

~~*X There should be problems with traffic at that time. The roads should be awful.*~~

✓ *There'll be problems with traffic at that time. The roads will be awful.*

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We use *should (not)/ ought (not) to* + have + past participle to talk about the probability of an action in the past:

I don't know where our main speaker can be. He should have arrived hours ago.

C PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

Complete the dialogue with the best words or phrases from the box. Use each word or phrase once only.

do I have to	had to	has to	have to	having to	must
need to	needs	obliged to	should	supposed to	will have to

BETH Hello. Reception said that you wanted a word with me.

LISA That's right. I'm interested in joining your gym. What (1)..... do?

BETH Take a seat. First, you (2) fill in this form. It asks for details about you and your state of health. We want to be sure that you're fit enough to use the gym.

LISA OK ... I have a slight problem with one knee. I twisted it a few weeks ago.

BETH Well, you really (3) tell the instructor about that, then he'll make sure that your fitness programme takes account of it.

LISA Fitness programme?

BETH Yes. If you join, you (4) have an induction session with one of our fitness instructors. He'll design a programme suited to your level of fitness.

LISA Oh, that's good. Now. it's £30 a month, isn't it?

BETH Well, yes, but that's the special rate if you take out an annual subscription, so you're (5) join for the whole year to get that rate. Otherwise it's £40 a month.

LISA I see. Yes, I think I'll join for the year. Is there anything else I should know?

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BETH Let's see ... there are some rules, but they're pretty obvious. Of course, everyone (6) wear appropriate clothes and footwear. There are lockers outside the gym, so you're not (7) take anything in with you. but we don't apply that rule very strictly. You'll probably want to take a towel and a bottle of water in with you anyway: you (8) drink plenty of water while you're exercising, to prevent dehydration.

LISA Yes ... are there any restrictions, like (9) book time ahead in the evenings?

BETH No. You can use the gym whenever it's open. Obviously, if you think a piece of equipment isn't working properly and (10) mending, tell an instructor. Also, for your own good, you (11) tell us if you feel unsure about how to use a particular machine.

LISA Of course. Now, the receptionist said I (12) provide a photo for the membership card, but I'm afraid I don't have one on me.

BETH That's OK. Bring it next time you come. Until then you can use your receipt as proof of membership.

Q 2.

Read the letter on the next page and decide which word or phrase below fits each space. In each case, only one answer is possible. Circle the letters you choose. The first one is given as an example (0).

0	A must not	B cannot	C need not
1	A need not have	B must not have	C had to
2	A mustn't have	B shouldn't have	C needn't have
3	A could not	B did not need to	C needed to
4	A are to	B are obliged to	C aren't allowed to
5	A must not	B are liable to	C must
6	A are required to	B do not have to	C need to
7	A need not	B do not need to	C have to
8	A need to	B do not have to	C must not

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9	A are not supposed to	B are not obliged to	C need not
10	A had to	B will have to	C are to
11	A shouldn't be allowed	B oughtn't be allowed	C needn't allowing
12	A need not have been	B must not have been	C did not have to be

Hilverstone Fox Watch

Dear New Member,

Many thanks for your application form for membership of the HFW (Hilverstone Fox Watch). Before I introduce the club to you, I would like to point out that you (0) ... pay your subscription until your membership application has been processed and approved, so those of you who joined at the fete last Saturday (1) ... provided cheques on the spot. Our representative (2) ... accepted your cheques. I am returning them where necessary, with apologies for any inconvenience.

HFW was set up three years ago for two reasons: to lobby for the abolition of fox-hunting – the founder members felt we (3) ... do this as the Hilverstone Hunt is so powerful in this area – but also to provide some protection for the urban foxes here, who (4) ... subsist on household scraps in some cases. Our meetings are fortnightly but please do not feel that you (5) ... attend each one. All our members, however, (6) ... attend six meetings a year and at least two all-night watches. We (7) ... insist upon this to prevent all of the work from falling on the shoulders of a few people.

One or two words of advice: a lot of people interested in foxes attempt to domesticate them by putting food down for them. Please – you (8) ... do this. For one thing, we (9) ... encourage vermin under local by-laws (and foxes are classed as vermin), but also, we (10) ... try to reintroduce these foxes to their natural habitat, as they are not naturally domestic creatures. Please remember also that female foxes with young cubs can be quite aggressive: children in particular (11) ... to go near them at this potentially dangerous time.

Finally, may I remind you that members of HFW (12) ... involved in the Hilverstone Hunt for at least one year prior to joining.

Thank you once again for your interest. I enclose a timetable of our meetings and events for the next three months, and look forward to welcoming you to one of them.

Yours faithfully,

Jonathan Harker

Q 3.

Complete texts A-C with an appropriate verb or expression. Use the information in the box to help you. The first one is given as an example (0).

REQUIREMENTS OF COURSE

course	important	advisable	unnecessary
A	keyboarding skills	access to a computer	prior publishing experience
B	previous experience	keyboarding skills	own computer
C	three GCSEs	good level of English	prior publishing experience/ computer skills

A DESK-TOP PUBLISHING

Ten-week intensive course for people interested in producing small-scale publications. Applicants for this course (0) ...**must**... have good keyboarding skills but are not (1)..... to have prior publishing experience. If possible, applicants (2) have access to a computer and Microsoft Publisher, but there are a limited number of machines available at the college.

B DESK-TOP PUBLISHING

Learn how to self-publish from the professionals! We offer Desk-top Publishing courses to suit all schedules and budgets, from five-week intensive courses to year-long evening courses. You (3) have your own computer (on our full-time courses) but you (4) have some previous experience in publishing. You (5) be able to use a keyboard. Call us on 01202 867349

C DESK-TOP PUBLISHING

One-year course. Applicants (6) have previous experience in publishing, as part of the course involves work experience with a local printing company. Equally, you are not (7) to have good computer skills as all basic training is provided. A minimum of three GCSEs is (8) and applicants (9) have a good level of English.

Q 4.

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Write four statements making deductions about each picture. Use the words and phrases underneath the pictures. The first one is given as an example (0).

- 0 (daughter) They must*be waiting for their daughter*.....
- 1 (on/train) She can't
- 2 (miss/it) She must
- 3 (child/mother) She must
- 4 (phone/parents) She can't
- 5 (rain) It
must
- 6 (slip/banana skin) The man must
- 7 (not/wife) She can't
- 8 (ambulance) Someone must

Q 5.

For each of the sentences below, write a new sentence as similar in meaning as possible to the original sentence, but using the word(s) given. The word(s) must not be altered in any way.

- 0 It looks certain that the orchestra's instruments are arriving on a later plane.
must*The orchestra's instruments must be arriving on a later plan*.....
- 1 I strongly recommend you to try this sundried tomato bread.
must
- 2 There is no obligation to get an international driving licence for this country.
have
- 3 It was stupid of the government to try to break the strike.

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should

4 I warn you not to chat up my girlfriend again!

had

5 We didn't book the table but it didn't matter as there was hardly anyone in the restaurant anyway.

need

6 My hair's much too long. I'll have to get it cut soon.

cutting

7 It is essential that you disconnect the gas supply before removing the boiler.

be disconnected

8 The management will not permit latecomers to enter the theatre until there is a suitable break.

allowed

9 Why do we have to state ethnic origin on official forms these days?

required

10 There can be no doubt that the solicitor has received the information by now.

must

11 It probably won't be difficult to get tickets for the first night.

should

12 It is essential that patients have not eaten or drunk anything for three hours before the operation.

must

Q 6.

Underline six more mistakes to do with modal verbs or expressions from this unit, then correct them.

Minutes of Holmeffield NeighbourCare meeting

1 Sergeant Dibden reminded us that we don't have to tackle a burglar if one ==> **mustn't**
2 enters our home as this can be very dangerous. He also reminded us that we
3 are supposed by law to inform the police and our insurance companies of all
4 keyholders after a break-in.
5 Mrs Sanders from Twyfield Close reported that she had been burgled two
6 afternoons before. The burglar should have got in through an open downstairs
7 window, although at that time of day there must be plenty of people
8 around who witnessed the break-in. You'd better report it to the police if you
9 saw anything as it's our civic duty.
10 Mr Harrison from Dukes Avenue was concerned that he hadn't taken up an
11 invitation from a security company to assess his house for security risks, but he
12 was relieved to discover from Sergeant Dibden that he needn't have invited
13 them anyway, as the police can do security checks.
14 Finally, remember, if you need speak to a police officer, you can call Sergeant
15 Dibden at Holmeffield police station at any time.

D ANSWER KEY FOR DIAGNOSTIC TEST

- 1 Having to
- 2 ought to
- 3 have to
- 4 have to
- 5 shouldn't have
- 6 need
- 7 are supposed to
- 8 couldn't go
- 9 are not allowed to
- 10 must not have
- 11 needn't
- 12 don't have to
- 13 didn't need to show
- 14 better
- 15 should
- 16 had better not
- 17 be raining
- 18 shouldn't
- 19 must have
- 20 had to have

E ANSWER KEY FOR PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

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- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1 do I have to | 7 supposed to |
| 2 have to | 8 should |
| 3 must | 9 having to |
| 4 will have to | 10 needs |
| 5 obliged to | 11 need to |
| 6 has to | 12 had to |

Q 2.

- 1 A 2 B 3 C 4 B 5 C
6 A 7 C 8 C 9 A 10 B
11 A 12 B

Q 3.

- 1 required
2 should
3 need not/do not have to
4 must
5 should
6 need not/do not have to
7 required/obliged
8 required/necessary
9 should

Q 4.

- 1 She can't have been on the train.
2 She must have missed it.

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- 3 She must be the child's mother.
- 4 She can't have phoned her parents.
- 5 It must have been raining.
- 6 The man must have slipped on the banana skin.
- 7 She can't be his wife.
- 8 Someone must have phoned for an ambulance.

Q 5.

- 1 You must try this sundried tomato bread.
- 2 You don't have to get an ...
- 3 The government should not have tried to ...
- 4 You had better not chat up ...
- 5 We didn't need to book the table as ...
- 6 My hair's much too long. It needs cutting soon.
- 7 The gas supply must be disconnected before you remove the boiler/before the boiler is removed.
- 8 Latecomers will not be allowed to enter the theatre ...
- 9 Why are we required to state ...
- 10 The solicitor must have received ...
- 11 It should not be difficult ...
- 12 Patients must not have eaten or drunk anything ...

Q 6.

Line 3: ~~supposed~~ ==> obliged/required

Line 6: ~~should have got in~~ ==> must have got in

Line 7: ~~there must be~~ ==> there must have been

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Line 8: ~~You'd better report it~~ ==> You should/ought to report it

Line 12: ~~needn't have invited~~ ==> didn't need to invite

Line 14: ~~need~~ ==> need to

**Advanced Grammar for IELTS: Modal verbs (3): will, would, shall –
Diagnose Test, Grammar Explanation & Practice Exercises**

A DIAGNOSTIC TEST: Modal verbs (3): will, would, shall

Complete the sentences with *will*, *'ll*, *won't*, *would*, *wouldn't* or *shall* and the correct form of the words in brackets.

Example:

The new play on Broadway is really good, but I don't like Sean Penn in it. Kevin Bacon.....**would be**.....(be) much better.

1 We had to hurry to get him to the hospital. We knew it (be) too late otherwise.

2 'I wonder where Dad is.' 'He (drive) to the airport, I should think.'

3 'Oh dear. The lecture starts at nine o'clock. I'm late!' 'Don't worry. This lecturer's always late. He (not/start) yet.'

4 At this point in the season, the parents (eat) their young rather than allow a predator to attack them.

5 The doctor (act) as a witness to your signature. She doesn't mind doing that sort of thing.

6 The PA (not/book) my flights. She says it isn't in her job description.

7 Dad (always/help) us out financially when we were at university, however difficult it was for him.

8 The police interrogated the terrorist for more than four hours, but she (not/reveal) the names of her co-conspirators.

9 You look tired. (I/make) supper this evening?

10 What (we/do) with Tom if he doesn't get into university?

11 (you/be) so kind as to help me across the road, young man?

12 We (like) everyone in this room to feel comfortable with the proposal.

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Circle the correct meaning or interpretation (a or b) for each sentence.

Example:

It would be so nice to live by the sea.

a The speaker lives by the sea.

b The speaker doesn't live by the sea.

13 If anyone rings in the next few minutes, I'll be in the storeroom.

a I'm in the storeroom now.

b I'm going to the storeroom.

14 Ralph isn't here right now, I'm afraid. He'll be at the office.

a He is at the office now.

b He's on his way to the office.

15 I've tried it again and again but the computer just won't accept my disc. I don't understand it.

a I'm annoyed with the computer.

b I am not concerned about the computer.

16 It's a relief that Annie's changed class. She would argue with everything I said.

a I didn't mind the arguments.

b The arguments annoyed me.

17 The secretary shall minute the proceedings of each meeting.

a The secretary is offering to do it.

b The secretary is instructed to do it.

18 'It looks as though the fuel crisis is over.' 'I wouldn't be too sure.'

a The second speaker agrees,

b The second speaker doesn't agree.

19 It would be so nice to have a little cottage in the country.

a The speaker doesn't have a cottage,

b The speaker has a cottage.

20 I would have liked to meet the professor while he was here.

a The speaker met the professor,

b The speaker didn't meet the professor.

B GRAMMAR EXPLANATION: Modal verbs (3): will, would, shall

Learners of English often think of 'will' as a way of expressing the future and of 'would' as a word which is used mainly in conditional sentences, but we use both of these modal verbs to express a number of other meanings. This unit also looks at 'shall' which, although it is the least-used modal in English, we can use to express a variety of meanings.

1. PREDICTION AND CERTAINTY

1A. Predictions about the future

We use *will/won't* to make predictions about the future:

He's been found guilty of murder. He'll be in prison for a long time.

You must work hard for this exam. It won't be easy.

1B. Past predictions about the future

Sometimes we wish to express a prediction about the future that someone made in the past. For this we often use *would/wouldn't* (*would* is the past form of *will*):

We had to hurry to get him to the hospital. We knew it would be too late otherwise.

This use of *would* is related to the use of *would* in reported speech:

I'm sure the Lions will win the rugby series this year. ==> She was sure the Lions would win the rugby series.

1C. Certainty about the present

We make confident 'predictions' about the present based on our knowledge or previous experience (or on current expectations) with *will/won't*:

'Rachel's in Turkey at the moment.' I hope she's taken some winter clothes because it won't be warm at this time of year. '

Compare this use of *will* and the present simple. We use the present simple to state a fact without expressing an opinion as to the certainty or otherwise of the event:

Janet isn't here at the moment. She's in France. (Fact – the speaker knows it's true.)

To say that we believe something is certain, we use *will/won't*:

It's five o'clock. Janet 'll be in Paris now. (Certainty – the speaker believes it's true.)

To express a certainty about something ongoing (i.e. where we would use the present continuous for a fact), we use *will/won't + be + -ing form*:

Jason is sympathetic because he knows his successor will be having a hard time at the moment.

1D. Certainty about the past

To refer to something which we feel certain has happened (but do not actually know), we use *will have + past participle*:

We sent the invitations on Monday, so they will have received them by now. Why hasn't anyone replied?

This is similar to *must have + past participle*:

We sent the invitations on Monday, so they must have received them by now.

We use *won't have + past participle* to refer to something which we feel certain has not happened:

We sent the invitations by second-class post. They won't have received them yet.

Note: We do not use *mustn't have + past participle* in this way, but we can use *can't have*:

~~*X We sent the invitations by second-class post. They mustn't have received them yet.*~~

✓ *We sent the invitations by second-class post. They can't have received them yet.*

2. CHARACTERISTICS, HABITS AND ROUTINES

2A. Present

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We often use *will/won't* to talk about actions that have become so routine that they are predictable:

Every lesson is the same: he'll sit down, get his books out and then he'll start giving us instructions. He won't greet us or show any interest in us.

We can extend this use of *will* to talk about habits and characteristics:

*The public **will** always side with the nurses in any dispute.*

*The dominant male of the group **will not** tolerate the presence of other males.*

We can also use the present simple to describe characteristics and habits:

*The public always **sides with** the nurses in any dispute.*

*The dominant male of the group **does not tolerate** the presence of other males.*

We often use *will* when talking about the characteristics of capacity or ability:

*The Olympic stadium in Sydney **will** hold 110,000 people.*

*This model **will** do 0 to 100 kilometres per hour in eight seconds.*

It is also possible to use *can* and the present simple for these last two uses with no change in meaning:

*The Olympic stadium in Sydney **can hold/ holds** 110,000 people.*

*This model **can do/ does** 0 to 100 kilometres per hour in eight seconds.*

We use *will* (not the present simple) to describe an annoying habit or to make a criticism:

We enjoy going out with Frank and Carol, but they will argue in public!

Note: We do not contract *will* when we use it to describe an annoying habit – we stress it:

X Geoff 'll leave the lights on when he's last out of the office.

*✓ Geoff **will** leave the lights on when he's last out of the office!*

We often use *will/won't* to criticise inanimate objects in this way:

Whatever I do, my car won't start first time on cold mornings.

To state a simple fact with no (or little) annoyance, we use the present simple:

My car doesn't start/never starts first time on cold mornings.

2B. Past

We use *would/wouldn't* to talk about habits in the past:

Every lesson was the same: he'd sit down and get his books out, then he'd start giving us instructions. He wouldn't greet us or show any interest in us.

We can use *would/wouldn't* to criticise or talk about annoying habits in the past:

I miss Dad, even though he would always tell me how to run my life!

Note: We do not usually contract *would* to 'd when we use it in this way; we stress it:

When Alan was a toddler he would cling on to me whenever a stranger came in.

However, we do not always stress *would* when it is followed by an adverb:

My boss was awful: he'd invariably find something for me to do at five o'clock.

We can use *would/wouldn't* to talk about inanimate objects:

The car would never start on winter mornings when we were in Sweden.

3. WILLINGNESS AND REFUSAL

3A. Present/future willingness and refusal

We use *will* to express willingness to do something:

The doctor will act as a witness to your signature. She doesn't mind doing that sort of thing.

We can use it to express *be willing to*. In this sense, we can use *will/ won't* in the *if* clause of a first conditional:

If you'll take a seat for a moment, Mr Franks will be with you soon. (If you are willing to take a seat for a moment,...)

We use *won't/shan't* to express unwillingness or refusal to do something:

The PA won't book my flights. She says it isn't in her job description.

'Go and buy some milk, will you, love?' 'No, I shan't. I'm busy.'

3B. Past willingness and refusal

We use *would/wouldn't* to show willingness or refusal in the past. We use *would* in the affirmative only to refer to general willingness (i.e. a habit):

Dad would always help us with our maths homework.

Note: We do not use *would* in the affirmative to express willingness to do something on a single occasion in the past:

~~*X The tour guide was very helpful. She would contact the Consulate for me when I lost my passport.*~~

✓ *The tour guide was very helpful. She contacted I offered to contact the Consulate for me when I lost my passport.*

We can use *would not* for refusal on a single occasion in the past:

The shop assistant wouldn't change this jumper for me, even though I hadn't worn it.

4. OTHER USES OF WILL/SHALL/WOULD

4A. Offers and promises

We can use both *will* and *shall* to make offers. We use *will* in the affirmative, both to make offers to do something ourselves and on behalf of other people:

Sit down. I'll wash up this evening.

Your car sounds a bit rough. Harry will take a quick look at it, if you like.

We use *shall* in questions to make more tentative offers than with *will* in the affirmative:

Shall I wash up this evening?

We use *will* to make promises:

My government will turn round the economy and reduce unemployment.

We can use *would*, *will* or *won't* when we offer something to another person:

Would you have/ like some more of the pie? (neutral)

Will you have some more of the pie? (neutral)

Won't you have some more of the pie? (more encouraging)

4B. Suggestions

We use *shall* in questions with *we* to make suggestions:

Shall we go out for a curry tonight? (= *Why don't we ...?/How about ...?*)

To ask for suggestions or advice, we can use *shall* with a question word:

What shall we do about Tom if he doesn't get into a university?

US English uses *should* in preference to *shall* for suggestions:

Let's decide what to do this evening. Should we go bowling?

Note: We use *shall* in question tags after *let's*.

Let's forget about it now and talk about something else, shall we?

Note: We use *would* in suggestions or responding to invitations if we want to be more tentative or distant:

It would be a good idea to get together one evening.

'Come to dinner on Sunday.' *'That would be nice. I'll let you know.'*

4C. Requests

We often make requests with *will*. These requests are informal and we usually use them only with people we know quite well:

Will you give me a call when you get to the hotel?

We use *would* to make requests more tentative or polite, or to request things of people we do not know so well:

Would you lend me the car tomorrow night. Dad?

Would you fill in this form, please, sir?

We can make a request more insistent by using *will* you as a question tag:

Come and look at this, will you?

If we make a request in this way, we do not expect the answer to be ‘no’:

Pick up my suit from the cleaner’s when you’re out, will you?

4D. Orders and instructions

We use *will* and *shall* for orders and formal instructions. We use *shall* for more formal instructions, especially in official documents:

You will/shall all stay behind for thirty minutes and clean this room.

The secretary shall minute the proceedings of each meeting.

We also use *shall/ will* for rules, for example of examinations and competitions:

The judge’s decision shall be final.

4E. Disagreeing

We can use *would/ wouldn’t* to show disagreement in a polite way:

I wouldn’t say that.

I wouldn’t go that far.

4F. Expressing desires and preferences

We often use *would* with verbs of liking and preference (like, love, prefer, etc.) to express desires and preferences which we think we can realise:

We’d love to come to your wedding on 6th September. Thank you for the invitation.

I’d prefer to lose weight by a tried and tested method than by a new trendy diet.

We can use *would* with *rather* to express a preference:

Our delegates would rather not stay at the conference centre.

Note: Note that we can use an object with these forms:

I would like you to listen to me when I ‘m talking!

5. HYPOTHETICAL WOULD

5A. Hypothetical desires about the present/future

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We use *would* with *be* or verbs of liking and wishing to express a desire for the present or future. Fulfilment of the desire is impossible or improbable:

It would be so nice to live by the sea. (The speaker doesn't live by the sea.)

I would prefer to be a man. (The speaker is a woman.)

To state a simple fact, we use the present simple:

It is nice to live by the sea.

We can use the present simple (*like*) to talk about something we currently like and do, but we use *would like* to talk about an unfulfilled desire:

I like to stay in five-star hotels. (I do stay in five-star hotels and enjoy it.)

I would like to stay in five-star hotels. (I don't stay in them, but it's my desire.)

Wish + *would* expresses a desire for another person (not) to do something:

I wish you wouldn't talk with your mouth full!

5B. Hypothetical desires about the past

If we want to comment on a hypothetical situation in the past, we use *would/ wouldn't + have +* past participle:

It would have been a good idea to notify us in advance of your intentions. (= The person did not notify anyone in advance.)

Note: British English often uses the perfect infinitive here:

(It would have been a good idea to have notified us in advance)

C PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

Complete these dialogues with *will, won't, would, wouldn't, + have* if necessary, and a form of the verbs in the box. The first one is given as an example (0).

argue come have hold prepare say start stop watch work
--

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0 ‘Sue says she’s enjoying the job but she’s putting on weight.’

‘Yes, that**will be**.... because of all those long business lunches.’

1 ‘Are you having problems with your new camera?’

‘Yes, the flash..... in semi-darkness, only when it’s fully dark.’

2 ‘Shop assistants used to be more polite, didn’t they?’

‘Yes, a few years ago they always..... “please” and “thank you” and smile.’

3 ‘Surely there are too many people here to get on one plane?’

‘No, a jumbo jet easily over 300 people.’

4 ‘I hope Josh is OK at that summer camp. He might be homesick.’

Don’t worry about him. He a great time!’

5 ‘Do you think that the jury will acquit Nick?’

‘I hope so. I’m sure that his lawyer a solid defence.’

6 ‘I don’t think this new secretary is as good as Janice was.’

‘I don’t know. Janice..... always whenever you pointed out errors in her typing.’

7 ‘The new horse at the riding stables seems to be working out very well.’

Quite well, but he and eat whenever he gets the opportunity!’

8 ‘Oh no, I’ve just noticed a mistake in the headline for the front page article!’

‘Phone the printers. They printing it yet – they don’t print until early morning.’

9 ‘What happened after the car broke down?’

Well, we knew that traffic..... along that road so late, so we slept in the car.’

10 Why are you and Jack arguing so much these days?’

‘He takes me for granted. He TV every evening and ignore me completely.’

Q 2.

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Rewrite the underlined parts of this phone conversation, using *will, won't, would and wouldn't*.

JAKE 020 7543 9216.

ALICE Hi, Jake. It's Alice here.

JAKE Alice, how nice to hear from you!

ALICE Actually, Jake, I'm phoning to ask you for some advice.

JAKE (0) I'm willing to help you if I can, of course.*I'll help you*.....

ALICE Your mother receives help from the Council, doesn't she? Can you tell me what (1) they agree to do and what (2) they don't agree to do for older people?

JAKE Yes, of course. Mum has a home help. She comes three times a week. (3) She's perfectly happy to do light cleaning and (4) she's willing to get the shopping, but (5) she refuses to do anything heavy.

ALICE That's fair enough. What about cooking?

JAKE Well, when she first started (6) she was happy to prepare supper when she came, but she stopped that after a few weeks.

ALICE Why was that?

JAKE You know my mum. (7) She insists on saying exactly what she thinks. Apparently the home help used to make Italian food and Mum didn't like it. (8) She refused to eat it. Why are you asking, anyway?

ALICE It's Dad. He can't move around very easily now. The neighbours are great, they (9) make a habit of popping in now and again but (10) he's unwilling to ask them for help if he's in trouble.

JAKE Mmm. You can understand that.

ALICE Oh, but he's so impatient. I take him to the shops once a week, but yesterday (11) the car refused to start and I was about half an hour late. (12) Was he willing to wait for me? No, (13) he insists on trying to cope by himself! He went to the shops and collapsed on the way there.

JAKE Oh, dear. It's a worry, isn't it? Look, (14) if you don't mind waiting for a few minutes. I'll look out the phone number for the right person at social services.

Q 3.

Complete the dialogues below the pictures. Use *will, shall or would*.

0

Student 1: Will you pass me the dictionary, please?

Student 2: Yes, here you are.

1. Woman:

Friend: I won't, thanks. I'm trying to lose weight

Teacher:

Student: Oh, Miss, not another essay for homework! We've already written two this week.

2. Man:

Women: Oh, yes, please! We always need someone to take the minutes.

3. Police Officer:

Thief: Come with you? No, why should I?

4. Man: I don't understand what you want from me!

Women:

Man: But I do respect you!

Q 4.

Read the article and then decide which word or phrase A, B or C below best fills each space. Circle the letter you choose for each question. The exercise begins with an example (0).

Words, words, words

The words that caught the mood of the decade are all there in book published yesterday – clone, concentration camp, gene, depression – except that was not the 1990s; these words (0)... current in the 1900s.

The Guinness Book of the Twentieth Century cites lists of buzzwords for each decade of the last century. At the outset of the 20th century, few people would have guessed that it (1)..... more

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language change than ever before. Of course, before the days of the communications revolution language evolved much more slowly. Many people today (2)..... language not to change at all, but that is an unrealistic dream in the age of the global village.

Words you(3).....every day, such as chatline and trainers, (4).....only thirty years ago. And a word as universal as teenager gained common currency only in the 1940s. Words change in meaning too: a scientist in the 1960s (5)..... clone to refer only to plants. And anyone who asked ‘(6)..... we watch the soap tonight?’ would have encountered total incomprehension before the Second World War. (Soap was what you washed with.)

There is a more worrying side to this, if you consider that new coinage reflects the society it comes from. Only twenty years ago few people (7)..... stalking, ethnic cleansing or road rage – concepts that the world (8).....perhaps be better without. It (9) nice to think that the 21st century (10)..... us happier words, but don’t hold your breath!

0	A would have been	B would be	C will have been
1	A will bring	B brought	C would bring
2	A would rather	B would prefer	C will prefer
3	A will hear	B will be hearing	C will have heard
4	A would not have been recognised	B would not be recognised	C will not recognise
5	A wouldn’t understand	B will be understanding	C would have understood
6	A Won’t	B Would	C Shall
7	A shall have understood	B would have understood	C will have understood
8	A would	B will	C shall
9	A will be	B would be	C would have been
10	A would bring	B would have brought	C will bring

Q 5.

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Read the statements from people who have or have had a disadvantaged life. Complete the sentences, expressing the people's desires and regrets about the past. Use the word in brackets.

0 We don't have running water in our homes. We have to collect water from the stream or from a pipe in the village. (**like**)

Aisha*would like to have running water in her homes*

1. We live in a wooden shack outside the city. It's very small but eight of us live in it. It's my dream to live in a real house. (**prefer**)

Pedro
.....

2. In my country we have to pay for medicine and a lot of people can't afford it. The government should provide free medicine. (**like**)

Esther

3. Every day I go into the town and I beg in the streets for money. Obviously I don't like going begging, but we need the money. (**rather**)

Sun-Li
.....

4. I wear the same clothes every day. I look at models in magazines and I'm very envious of their beautiful clothes. (**be nice**)

Hana thinks
it.....

5. I live in a village just outside a big city. The village is OK. but rich people from the city come and dump their rubbish in our village. It's dreadful! (**wishes**)

Sunil
.....

6. I didn't go to school. My family couldn't afford to send me. So now I can only get a badly-paid job. It's such a pity, because I enjoy learning new things. (**been good**)

Maria thinks it
.....

Q 6.

There are nine more mistakes in this text connected with the language in this unit. Underline the mistakes and correct them.

1 I'll never forget the day my life changed. It was a normal day – in those days I
2 shall do my homework straight after school so that I could go and listen to pop => **would**
3 music at Janice's after dinner. So I was sitting in front of the fire, trying to keep
4 warm. Mum was ironing. I looked at the clock.
5 Dad's late,' I remarked to Mum.
6 It's Thursday. He'd be visiting Granny.'
7 My grandmother lived in a cold, draughty cottage on the moors. Mum and
8 Dad wanted her to move in with us, but our house was very small, and she won't
9 They knew that the cold winter months would have hastened her death – she
10 already suffered from chronic bronchitis – but she was a stubborn old woman
11 who will insist on her independence.
12 Won't it be nice if we had some money? We could buy a big house and
13 Granny could have a flat of her own in it. I hate being poor.'
14 Oh, pet, I shan't say we're poor. We're not as well off as some, but we've
15 got a roof over our heads and food in our bellies.' Mum would always see
16 the best in every situation. It really annoyed me! 'Will I make a nice cup of tea?
17 Your Dad would be frozen when he gets in. He'll want to save the bus fare so
18 I'm sure he's walked all the way from your grandmother's.'
19 At that moment, the door opened and Dad walked in, waving a slip of paper.
20 'Forget the tea, Mary. We're going out tonight. First prize in the lottery.
21 We're rich!'

D ANSWER KEY FOR DIAGNOSTIC TEST

- 1 would be
- 2 'll be driving
- 3 won't have started
- 4 will eat/eat
- 5 will act 18
- 6 won't book
- 7 would always help
- 8 would not reveal
- 9 Shall I make
- 10 shall we do
- 11 Would you be
- 12 would like
- 13 b
- 14 a
- 15 a
- 16 b
- 17 b
- 18 b
- 19 a
- 20 b

E ANSWER KEY FOR PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

1 won't work

2 would always say

3 will easily hold

4 will be having

5 will have prepared

6 would always argue

7 will stop

8 won't have started

9 wouldn't come

10 will watch

Q 2.

1 they will do

2 they won't do

3 She'll do light cleaning

4 she'll get the shopping

5 she won't do anything heavy

6 she would prepare supper

7 She will say (exactly) what she thinks.

8 She wouldn't eat it.

9 will pop in

10 he won't ask them for help

11 the car wouldn't start

12 Would he wait for me?

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13 he will try to cope by himself

14 if you'll wait for a few minutes

Q 3. Suggested answers:

1 Will you/Won't you have another piece/some more cake?

2 You will all write the/this essay for homework.

3 Shall I take the minutes?

4 Will/Would you come with us, please (Sir)?

5 I would like you to respect me.

Q 4.

1 C 2 B 3 A 4 A 5 C

6 C 7 B 8 A 9 B 10 C

Q 5.

1 Pedro would prefer to live in a real house.

2 Esther would like the government to provide free medicine.

3 Sun-Li would rather not go begging in the streets.

4 Hana thinks it would be nice to have some beautiful clothes.

5 Sunil wishes that rich people from the city wouldn't dump their rubbish in the village.

6 Maria thinks it would have been good to go to school.

Q 6.

Line 6 ~~He'd be visiting~~ ==> He'll be visiting

Line 8 ~~she won't~~ ==> she wouldn't

Line 9 ~~would have hastened~~ ==> would hasten

Line 11 ~~will insist~~ ==> would insist

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Line 12 ~~Won't it be~~ ==> Wouldn't it be

Line 14 ~~I shan't say~~ ==> I wouldn't say

Line 16 ~~Will I make~~ ==> Shall I make

Line 17 ~~would be frozen~~ ==> will be frozen

Line 18 ~~he's walked~~ ==> he'll have walked

Round up: MODEL VERBS

function	time	form	example
ability	present	can is/are able to	<i>She can speak Spanish but she can't speak Italian.</i> <i>Despite his handicap he is able to drive a car.</i>
	past	could was/ were able to	<i>Mozart could play the piano at the age of five.</i> <i>16.18</i> <i>Mike's car broke down but he was able to repair it.</i>
possibility	present	may, might, could	<i>There may be life on Mars.</i> <i>The rash could be a symptom of something more serious.</i>
	past	could have, might have	<i>She might have done it; she had the opportunity and the motive.</i>
	future	will be able to	<i>We'll be able to travel to the moon but we won't be able to travel to Mars.</i>
arrangements	future	can, could, be able to	<i>The doctor could see you at six; he can't see you before then as he's too busy.</i>

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permission	present/ future	can, can't	<i>Can I use your phone? 'No, I'm afraid you can't'</i>
	past	allowed to	<i>I was allowed to leave early yesterday.</i>
obligation	present	have (got) to	<i>Students have (got) to wear school uniform here.</i>
		must	<i>I must get up earlier.</i>
		need (to)	<i>Do we need to get o visa for the USA?</i>
obligation	past	should	<i>You should respect your neighbour.</i>
		had to	<i>We had to report to reception by four</i>
obligation	future	will have to, will, need to	<i>We'll have to/'ll need to get our visas sorted out.</i>
		necessity	present
past	had to, needed to		<i>Cave dwellers had to / needed to hunt in order to survive.</i>
future	will have to, will need to		<i>You'll have to/'ll need to work harder than that.</i>
prohibition	present/ future	must not	<i>You mustn't touch that kettle!</i>
		cannot, may not should not	<i>Guests can't/ may not use the pool after 11 p.m.</i> <i>You shouldn't speak to me like that!</i>
prohibition	past	could not	<i>We couldn't go because we were too young</i>

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past criticism		should (not) have	<i>You shouldn't have driven through that red light.</i>
absence of obligation or necessity	present	do not have to, do not need to	<i>You don't have to/ don't need to pay to visit most museums in Britain.</i>
	past	did not have to, did not need to, need not have	<i>You didn't have to/ didn't need to finish the job. We needn't have taken sweaters as it was so warm there.</i>
	future	will not have to, will not need to	<i>You won't have to /won't need to ask the doctor to sign this form.</i>
advice/ recommendation	present/ future	must should had better	<i>You really must read 'Birdsong'! You should consider a private pension. You'd better change the locks straight away.</i>
logical deduction	present/ future	must, have to cannot	<i>This must /has to be the place. This amount can't be correct</i>
	past	must have cannot have	<i>That noise must have been an explosion. She can't have done it – she wasn't even here</i>
probability	present/ future	should	<i>The plane should be landing now.</i>
	past	should have	<i>What's happened to the bogs? They should have arrived hours ago.</i>
certainty	present	will	<i>It won't be warm at this time of year.</i>
	past	will have	<i>They'll have received the invitations by now.</i>

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routines	present	will	<i>He'll come in and he'll start giving instructions.</i>
	past	would	<i>He'd come in and he'd start giving instructions</i>
habits	present	will	<i>The public will always side with the nurses.</i>
	past	would	<i>Dad would always tell me how to run my life</i>
characteristic	present	will	<i>The stadium will hold about 110,000 people.</i>
	past	would	<i>The car wouldn't start on cold morning</i>
willingness/ refusal	present	will, won't	<i>The doctor will act as a witness.</i>
	past	would, wouldn't	<i>The shop wouldn't change this jumper.</i>
other function	present/ future	will, shall	<i>I'll wash up this evening.</i>
		shall	<i>Shall I wash up this evening?</i>
hypothetical desires	present/ future	will	<i>Shall we go out for a curry?</i>
		would	<i>Will you give me a call?</i>
	past	will, shall	<i>Would you fill in this form, please?</i>
		would	<i>You will/ shall all stay after school tonight.</i>
desires	present/ future	would	<i>It would be nice to live by the sea.</i>
	past	would have	<i>It would have been a good idea to notify us in advance.</i>

**Advanced Grammar for IELTS: Adjectives – Diagnose Test,
Grammar Explanation & Practice Exercises**

A DIAGNOSTIC TEST: Adjectives

Fifteen of these sentences have mistakes. These may be an incorrect word, a spelling mistake or an error in word order. Tick (✓) the five correct sentences, then underline the mistakes in the others and write the corrections.

Examples: I'm afraid the only seat available is on the early morning flight. ✓

Our ~~squad~~ ~~national~~ is one of the best this country has ever produced. ==> *national squad*

- 1 London features numerous histories sites such as Westminster Abbey.
- 2 I'm writing a report on the political attitudes of the young's.
- 3 The health care needs of the old are a major problem for many western countries.
- 4 We've won first prize? What amazing!
- 5 A plant being built outside the town is chemical.
- 6 Try not to disturb the asleep children.
- 7 They are doing experiments on alive animals.
- 8 Please don't tell me negative anything.
- 9 I'm afraid that's the only answer possible.
- 10 Our latest release is a film suitable for all ages.
- 11 The involved people will be caught and severely punished.
- 12 We will be supplying an antidote to all those infected by the virus.
- 13 To avoid theft please make use of the provided security boxes.
- 14 The report into the rail crash was rather worried.
- 15 I always seem to play for the lost team!

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- 16 Interest in Latino music is no longer confined to speaking Spanish audiences.
- 17 We've inherited a dining mahogany table from my great aunt.
- 18 They're selling that Victorian wonderful house on the corner.
- 19 The players will be wearing blue and red striped shirts for today's match.
- 20 The interview panel felt the applicant was well-informed and honest, capable.

B GRAMMAR EXPLANATION: Adjectives

Adjectives in English seem straightforward as they do not change their form except when they are comparatives or superlatives. But the different positions of adjectives, e.g. *concerned residents* or *residents concerned*, and the sequence of groups of adjectives can cause difficulty. This unit looks at these areas and at the use of participle and compound adjectives.

1. ADJECTIVE PATTERNS

1A. Form and use

Adjectives are words which give extra information about nouns. They do not change their form to show number or gender:

*The hero was played by a **young boy**. Several **young girls** took the secondary roles.*

Many adjectives are formed from other words; notice the spelling changes:

+ ic	+ (i)al	+ able	+ ful	+ ent	+ ive
history => historic	politics => political	fashion => fashionable	beauty => beautiful	depend => dependent	effect => effective
+ ous	+ less	participles	compounds		
danger => dangerous	hope => hopeless	interesting interested	home-made red-hot		

Adjectives can sometimes act as nouns when they describe a particular group or characteristic. We usually use the definite article and a plural verb:

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Old people are becoming more numerous. = *The old are becoming more numerous.*

Note: We cannot use the possessive 's with adjectives used as nouns or make them plural:

X The government is looking at the disabled's problems.

✓ *The government is looking at the problems of the disabled*

X The Japaneses enjoy a high standard of living.

✓ *The Japanese (or Japanese people) enjoy a high standard of living.*

Note: When we make a brief comment in conversation we often use 'what + adjective + noun' or 'how + adjective':

What an amazing story! *X What amazing!* ✓ *How amazing!*

1B. Attributive position

Most adjectives can be used in front of a noun (attributive position), or after a linking verb, e.g. *be* (predicative position):

- Attributive: *We've just seen an exciting film*
- Predicative: *That film was exciting*

Note: But there are some adjectives which we usually only use in one position. Some classifying adjectives (which describe what type of thing something is) and emphasising adjectives are mainly used before a noun (see the table below):

X The plant they are building outside the town is chemical

✓ *They're building a chemical plant outside the town.*

Adjectives usually used in attributive position:

Classifying adjectives	<i>chemical, chief, criminal, elder, entire, eventual, former, industrial, local, lone, main, maximum, medical, national, nuclear, only, outdoor/ indoor, principal, social, sole, underlying, whole</i>
Emphasising	<i>mere, sheer, utter</i>

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adjectives	
------------	--

1C. Predicative position

Adjectives in predicative position are usually the complement of a linking verb (e.g. *be, become, feel, seem*):

When she heard the noise Mary became very uneasy.

However, after certain verbs of thinking and feeling (i.e. *consider, find, think*) we can omit the linking verb:

I consider/ find him (to be) very reliable.

Many adjectives beginning with the letter *a* and adjectives describing health and feelings are not usually used before nouns; we use them in predicative position:

~~*X Try not to disturb the asleep children.*~~

✓ *Try not to disturb the children; they are asleep*

Adjectives usually used in predicative position:

beginning with a	<i>ablaze, afloat, afraid, alight, alike, alive, alone, aloof, ashamed, askew, asleep, awake, aware</i>
health and feelings	<i>content, fine, glad, ill, pleased, poorly, ready, sorry, sure, upset, (un)well</i>

Note: There are some fixed phrases/idioms in which we use normally predicative adjectives before a noun with a special meaning, e.g. *glad tidings, an ill wind, a ready wit, a sorry state, an upset stomach*.

Some predicative adjectives have equivalent words which can be used before a noun:

*They are doing experiments on **live** animals/ animals which are **alive**.*

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predicative	<i>alive</i>	<i>afraid</i>	<i>alike</i>	<i>asleep</i>	<i>ill</i>
attributive	<i>live/ living</i>	<i>frightened</i>	<i>similar</i>	<i>sleeping</i>	<i>sick</i>

1D. Adjectives after nouns, pronouns, etc.

We use adjectives after indefinite words like *something*, *anyone*, *no one*, *nothing*, *somewhere*, etc.:

X *I'm looking for cheap something*

✓ *I'm looking for something cheap*

Some adjectives, including some ending in *-able* and *-ible*, can follow a noun if the noun follows a superlative adjective or the *first/ last/ next/ only*.

They say she's the oldest woman alive

I'm afraid that's the last ticket available

Adjectives that are followed by a prepositional phrase, e.g. *interested in something*, *suitable for somebody*, go after, not before, a noun:

X *The project will appeal to interested in ecology students*

✓ *The project will appeal to students interested in ecology.*

This is similar to a reduced relative clause. We can also use a full relative clause with the adjective in predicative position:

The project will appeal to students who are interested in ecology

Note: Some adjectives have a different meaning when used before or after a noun:

*The meeting was full of **concerned** residents.* (= worried)

*The students **concerned** were a small minority.* (= who took part/were involved)

*I'm afraid we have **opposite** points of view.* (= contrasting)

*We used to live in the house **opposite*** (= physically facing/across from us)

*The **present** chairman is getting on a bit.* (= current/existing now)

*We took a vote of all members **present*** (= physically there)

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Responsible parents have been outraged by this show. (= caring/conscientious)

The person **responsible** will be caught and punished. (= who did the action)

He gave us a ridiculously **involved** excuse. (= complicated)

The president gave medals to all those **involved** (= who took part)

2. PARTICIPLE (-ING OR -ED) ADJECTIVES

2A. Position

We often use -ing and -ed participles as adjectives. We usually use them in the same positions as other adjectives:

*A win, even by only one goal, would be a **satisfying** result.*

*I never find fast food very **satisfying**.*

*Recommendations from **satisfied** customers got our business off the ground.*

*We follow up every complaint from customers **dissatisfied** with our service.*

Some participle adjectives (see the table below) can be used on their own before or after a noun:

The chosen song features innovative use of digital sampling.

The song chosen may be a disappointment to lovers of traditional ballads.

Note: But some participle adjectives (see the table below) can only be used after a noun:

~~*X Please dispose of your cigarettes in the provided ashtrays.*~~

✓ Please dispose of your cigarettes in the ashtrays provided

before or after a noun	affected, chosen, identified, infected, remaining, selected, stolen
only after a noun	applying, caused, discussed, found, provided, questioned, taken

2B. Use

When we use participles as adjectives, -ing participles have an active meaning and -ed participles have a passive meaning:

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I always seem to play for the losing team. (= the team which is losing)

She found the lost ring under the sofa. (= the ring which had been lost)

We often use participles as adjectives to describe feelings or opinions. We use –ing participles to describe a feeling that something causes:

It was a frightening film. (= it frightened us/ it made us feel afraid)

We use -ed participles to describe a feeling that someone experiences:

I felt frightened when I watched that film. (= I was frightened/ I experienced fear)

Note: Inanimate objects cannot have feelings so we don't usually use -ed adjectives about feelings to describe them:

~~*X The report into the Paddington rail crash was rather worried*~~

✓ *The report was rather worrying* (= The report made readers feel anxious.)

We can use *that/ those* with all participle adjectives with a meaning like 'the one/the ones that ...'. In this pattern we use *that* to refer to a thing and *those* to refer to things or people:

The easiest route is that taken by Amundsen. (= the one which was taken by)

Those living in temporary accommodation will be rehoused within three months. (= those people who are living in)

I feel sorry for those left behind. (= Those people that are left behind.)

2C. Compounds

We sometimes combine participles with other words to make compound adjectives. The participle usually comes last. Notice the use of hyphens when the compound adjective is used before a noun:

*This Japanese maple is a particularly **slow-growing** variety.*

*Handel's 'Xerxes' was a **rarely-performed** opera until relatively recently.*

*Interest in Latino music is no longer confined to a **Spanish-speaking** audience.*

*The marines made a **death-defying** leap over the cliff edge.*

3. GROUPS OF ADJECTIVES

3A. Adjective order

We often use more than one adjective to describe a noun. The order of adjectives generally follows this sequence of categories:

Opinion + size + quality/ character + age + shape + colour + participles + origin + material + type + purpose

*The 747's refurbished interior features **fantastic soft grey leather** seats.*

*For sale: **small, old, French** carriage clock.*

We always put the category which is most permanent or important (usually 'type' or 'purpose') next to the noun:

X ~~The builders took out the gas heating antiquated system.~~

*✓ **The builders took out the antiquated gas heating system.***

And we put opinion adjectives before all others:

X ~~I've just bought this new mobile fantastic phone.~~

*✓ **I've just bought this fantastic new mobile phone.***

Note: We don't usually use more than three or four adjectives before a noun. If we want to give more information we can use additional clauses:

*[It's a **charming small nineteenth-century French brass** carriage clock.]*

*✓ **It's a charming small French carriage clock, made of brass and dating from the nineteenth century.***

3B. Paired adjectives

If two adjectives describe different parts of the same thing we put 'and' between them.

X ~~The chrome steel facade glinted in the sunlight.~~

*✓ **The chrome and steel facade glinted in the sunlight.** (= Some parts were chrome, some parts were steel.)*

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We always use ‘and’ between two colours:

X The players will be wearing blue red shirts for this match.

*✓ The players will be wearing **blue and red** shirts for this match.*

We can use ‘and’ between two adjectives which describe similar aspects of something:

*She’s looking for a **stable and long-lasting** relationship.*

When two adjectives describe contrasting aspects of the same thing we put ‘but’, ‘yet’ or ‘though’ between them:

*The flat was located in a **rundown but central** part of town.*

*Croup therapy can be a **simple yet effective** solution to this sort of problem.*

3C. Using commas and ‘and’

When there are several adjectives in predicative position we usually put ‘and’ before the last one:

*I’m afraid the hotel was **ancient, dirty and overpriced**.*

With longer lists of adjectives of the same category before a noun we can use commas and put *and* before the last adjective, or we can simply list the adjectives:

*I found him a **friendly, knowledgeable and dedicated** guide.*

*I found him a **friendly knowledgeable dedicated** guide.*

We don’t use *and* before the last adjective when the adjectives are of different categories:

*X We enjoyed sitting in the **fantastic soft grey and leather** seats.*

*✓ We enjoyed sitting in the **fantastic soft grey leather** seats.*

C PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

Use the word in the box to form an adjective that fits in the numbered space in the sentence. The exercise begins with an example (0).

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0	politics	11	argue
1	depend	12	fashion
2	able	13	plenty
3	meteor	14	believe
4	face	15	hope
5	hysteria	16	horizon
6	destroy	17	investigation
7	disagree	18	effect
8	Britain	19	laugh
9	point	20	Holland
10	fertility		

0 I have absolutely no interest in*political*..... debates.

1. Entry to the single currency zone is _____ on meeting several financial criteria.
2. Most public car parks now have special parking bays for the _____
3. John F Kennedy enjoyed a _____ rise to fame in the 1960s.
4. Our lives are ruled by _____ bureaucrats who seem to be answerable to no one.
5. It was more than funny, it was absolutely _____ !
6. People claim the rise of popular culture has had a _____ effect on national identity.
7. There are few things more _____ than people who shout at waiters.
8. They say the _____ love their pets more than their children.
9. I've made my mind up and any attempt to change it is _____ .
10. The soil in this valley is particularly _____ .

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11. As a teenager I went through a very _____ phase.
12. Unfortunately, a sense of moral duty seems to be becoming increasingly _____ these days.
13. Orange and lemon trees are _____ in this part of Spain.
14. Two weeks in the Bahamas for less than a hundred dollars? That's _____ !
15. There's no point carrying on, the situation is _____.
16. The compass will only work when laid on a _____ surface.
17. That documentary on drug smuggling was a fine example of _____ journalism.
18. Dry cleaning is often the only _____ way to deal with stubborn stains.
19. Some of his pathetic excuses were downright _____.
20. According to recent statistics the _____ have Europe's highest per capita income.

Q 2.

Look at these pairs of sentences. Tick (✓) those which are grammatically correct and cross (X) those which are incorrect. In some cases, both sentences are correct.

1	A	Cost is the chief factor.	B	The cost factor is chief.
2	A	This is the principal argument.	B	This argument is principal.
3	A	He had an ashamed feeling.	B	He felt ashamed.
4	A	That's a ridiculous idea.	B	That idea is ridiculous.
5	A	The village has a local post office.	B	The village post office is local
6	A	It was sheer madness	B	The madness was sheer.
7	A	You have a ready dinner.	B	Your dinner is ready
8	A	He had an alone sensation.	B	He sensed he was alone.
9	A	We're building an indoor pool.	B	The pool we are building is indoor

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10	A	You have very alike children	B	Your children are very alike
11	A	That was a silly comment	B	That comment was silly.
12	A	She's a mere beginner.	B	That beginner is mere
13	A	They are afraid people.	B	Those people are afraid.
14	A	We have maximum security here	B	Here the security is maximum.
15	A	He's my ill brother.	B	My brother is ill

Q 3.

Indicate the correct position for the adjective or phrase in brackets, as in the example. The word the adjective/phrase describes is underlined.

0 There was <u>nothing</u> / in the book.	0 (original)
1 Many of the <u>portraits</u> are in the Prado Museum.	1 (painted by El Greco)
2 There was <u>something</u> about her behaviour.	2 (inexplicable)
3 They gave an <u>explanation</u> which simply served to confuse the jury.	3 (involved)
4 I'm afraid six o'clock is the only <u>appointment</u> .	4 (available)
5 The <u>state of affairs</u> is unlikely to continue for much longer.	5 (present)
6 I'm afraid the <u>person</u> is on holiday at the moment.	6 (responsible for recruitment)
7 They've started having late night parties in the <u>apartment</u> .	7 (opposite)
8 <u>Anyone</u> would be deeply offended by that harrowing documentary.	8 (sensitive)
9 Don't worry about getting receipts, the <u>amounts</u> are very small.	9 (concerned)
10 <u>Flower buds</u> often turn black and rot away.	10 (damaged by frost)

Q 4.

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Study the numbered options in **bold** in this text. Underline the correct options. Note that in some cases both options are correct.

Airport hell

Results of a recent survey of international air travellers have revealed (1) **alarmed/ alarming** discrepancies in the levels of (2) **comfort and service provided/ provided comfort and service** at many leading airports around the world. A (3) **staggered /staggering** 75 per cent of (4) **interviewed those/ those interviewed** felt that airports were failing to provide a (5) **relaxed/ relaxing** and efficient environment.

Airports in Britain and the United States came in for particular criticism. Fewer than one in ten people were fully (6) **satisfied/ satisfying** with the (7) **provided service/ service provided** at leading airports in these countries.

Researchers point to the enormous growth in passenger numbers in the last twenty years, a (8) **continued/ continuing** trend which has not been reflected in a corresponding growth in airport facilities.

By contrast, airports in the growing economies of south-east Asia and the Pacific have received far higher satisfaction ratings. Many (9) **questioned passengers/ passengers questioned** felt that these airports, which are generally more modern than their equivalents in the West, usually offered (10) **enhanced/ enhancing** check-in facilities and a more pleasant environment when compared to their competitors.

A (11) **discussed key factor/ key factor discussed** in the report is the way in which airports deal with flight delays. The better airports have found ways to cope with (12) **bored/ boring** passengers, ranging from television lounges to children's activity areas. (13) **Delayed/ Delaying** passengers seem to appreciate small details such as comfortable seating and the availability of a wide range of refreshments. (14) **Affected passengers/ Passengers affected** were less likely to complain if their children were (15) **amused/ amusing** and they were able to find inexpensive cafes and bars.

Q 5.

Improve these sentences by rewriting them using compound participle adjectives to replace the underlined phrases. Use suitable forms of one word from each box to form the compound adjectives and make any changes necessary to grammar and word order.

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brilliant car digital home film fast rare ~~rapid~~ slow
technology well

colour drive know manufacture visit enhance ~~expand~~ go g
row make move

0 São Paulo is a city which is getting bigger very quickly.

==> *São Paulo is a rapidly – expanding city.*

1 Northumberland is a part of England which people don't go to very often.

2 They were soon engulfed by the water which was flowing very quickly.

3 In recent times changes which are caused by technical developments have had a profound impact on working practices.

4 The oak is a tree which doesn't get bigger very quickly.

5 Australian parrots have plumage which is a mixture of bright red, yellow and green.

6 The Midlands is Britain's main region that produces automobiles.

7 The Hubble space telescope has produced pictures which are improved by electronic means that have amazed the public.

8 There is a segment of the public that visits cinemas that will always want to see corny adventure movies.

9 The new wing will be opened by a TV personality whom many people have heard of.

10 The desserts which are produced by ourselves are the main feature of our restaurant.

Q 6.

Rewrite these jumbled sentences with the words in the correct order. As a clue the first word of the sentence has a capital letter.

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0 terraced/in/Victorian/They/a/live/house/wonderful

==> ***They live in a wonderful Victorian terraced house.***

1 wine/It's/ancient/jar/a/Greek/priceless/ceramic

2 new/a/centre/Our/has/fantastic/school/state-of-the-art/computer

3 superb/textured/the/She/ten/sales/found/metres/dark/blue/of/velvet/in

4 Italian/It/upholstery/luxurious/features/leather

5 orange/for/studyAA/e've/a/lovely/chosen/inexpensive/and/wallpaper/green/the

Q 7.

All these sentences contain mistakes. Find the mistakes and rewrite the sentences correctly. In some cases you may need to add, remove or change words; in others, you may need to change the word order.

0 The house was draughty, and damp cold.

==> ***The house was draughty, damp and cold.***

1 Sylvia had a warm, gentle but friendly personality.

2 They've just bought a little Persian beautiful cat.

3 That documentary about racism was truly horrified.

4 This was the taken route by the original explorers.

5 The wealthies seem to have all the power in our capitalist societies.

6 The book is bound to appeal to fascinated by crime readers.

7 We comforted the afraid children after their terrifying ordeal.

8 On many questions my father and I have opinions opposite.

9 They've chosen a blue yellow colour scheme for their kitchen.

10 The injured bird appeared to have a breaking wing.

11 The boat has an aluminium and glass-fibre unique hull.

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- 12 I'm afraid the city was noisy though overcrowded.
- 13 A new form of licensing is the proposed by parliament solution.
- 14 No punishment is severe enough for the responsible person for these crimes.
- 15 We are an action group acting on behalf of parents who are lone.
- 16 It was difficult because we had to choose between two alike alternatives.
- 17 Tall anyone will find these seats cripplingly uncomfortable.
- 18 Living in Scotland viewers may experience poor reception due to weather conditions.
- 19 Karen found her new job to be well- paid and challenged.
- 20 The movie is a moving fast account of events during the Gulf War.

D ANSWER KEY FOR DIAGNOSTIC TEST

1. ~~histories~~ ==> historic
2. ~~young's~~ ==> young
3. ✓
4. ~~What amazing!~~ ==> How amazing!/ What amazing news!
5. ~~A plant being built outside the town is chemical~~ ==> A chemical plant is being built outside the town./ The plant being built outside the town is a chemical one.
6. ~~the asleep children~~ ==> the sleeping children/the children who are asleep
7. ~~alive animals~~ ==> live/living animals/animals who/which/that are alive
8. ~~negative anything~~ ==> anything negative
9. ✓
10. ✓
11. ~~involved people~~ ==> people involved
12. ✓

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13. ~~provided security boxes~~ ==> security boxes provided
14. ~~worried~~ ==> worrying
15. ~~lost~~ ==> losing
16. ~~speaking Spanish~~ ==> Spanish- speaking
17. ~~dining mahogany table~~ ==> mahogany dining table
18. ~~Victorian wonderful~~ ==> wonderful Victorian
19. ✓
20. ~~well informed and honest capable~~ ==> well-informed, honest and capable

E ANSWER KEY FOR PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

1. dependent	11. argumentative
2. disabled	12. unfashionable
3. meteoric	13. plentiful
4. faceless	14. unbelievable
5. hysterical	15. hopeless
6. destructive	16. horizontal
7. disagreeable	17. investigative
8. British	18. effective
9. pointless	19. laughable
10. fertile	20. Dutch

Q 2.

1 A ✓ B X

2 A ✓ B X

3 A X B ✓

4 A ✓ B ✓

5 A ✓ B X

6 A ✓ B X

7 A X B ✓

8 A X B ✓

9 A ✓ B X

10 A X B ✓

11 A ✓ B ✓

12 A ✓ B X

13 A X B ✓

14 A ✓ B X

15 A X B ✓

Q 3.

1 Many of the portraits painted by El Greco are

2 There was something inexplicable

3 They gave an involved explanation

4 the only appointment available./the only available appointment.

5 The present state of affairs

6 the person responsible for recruitment is on holiday

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7 in the apartment opposite.

8 Anyone sensitive would be

9 the amounts concerned are very small.

10 Flower buds damaged by frost often

Q 4.

1 alarming	8 continuing
2 comfort and service provided	9 passengers questioned
3 staggering	10 enhanced
4 those interviewed	11 key factor discussed
5 relaxed/relaxing	12 bored
6 satisfied	13 Delayed
7 service provided	14 Affected passengers/ Passengers affected
	15 amused

Q 5.

1 Northumberland is a rarely- visited part of England.

2 They were soon engulfed by the fast-moving water.

3 In recent times technology-driven changes have had a profound impact on working practices.

4 The oak is a slow-growing tree.

5 Australian parrots have brilliantly-coloured plumage.

6 The Midlands is Britain's main car-manufacturing region.

7 The Hubble space telescope has produced digitally-enhanced pictures that have amazed the

public.

8 There is a segment of the film-going public that will always want to see corny adventure movies.

9 The new wing will be opened by a well-known TV personality.

10 The home-made desserts are the main feature of our restaurant.

Q 6.

1 It's a priceless ancient Creek ceramic wine jar.

2 Our school has a fantastic new state-of-the-art computer centre.

3 She found ten metres of superb dark blue textured velvet in the sales.

4 It features luxurious Italian leather upholstery.

5 We've chosen a lovely inexpensive orange and green/ green and orange wallpaper for the study.

Q 7.

1 ~~but~~ ==> and

2 ~~a little Persian beautiful cat~~ ==> a beautiful little Persian cat

3 ~~horrified~~ ==> horrifying/ horrific

4 ~~the taken route~~ ==> the route taken

5 ~~wealthies~~ ==> wealthy

6 ~~to fascinated by crime readers~~ ==> to readers fascinated by crime

7 ~~afraid~~ ==> frightened

8 ~~opinions opposite~~ ==> opposite opinions

9 ~~blue yellow~~ ==> blue and yellow

10 ~~breaking~~ ==> broken

11 ~~aluminium and glass fibre unique hull~~ ==> unique aluminium and glass- fibre hull

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12 ~~though~~ ==> and

13 ~~the proposed by parliament solution~~ ==> the solution proposed by parliament

14 ~~responsible person~~ ==> person responsible

15 ~~parents who are lone~~ ==> lone parents

16 ~~two alike alternatives~~ ==> two similar alternatives/ two alternatives which were alike

17 ~~Tall anyone~~ ==> Anyone tall

18 ~~Living in Scotland viewers~~ ==> Viewers living in Scotland

19 ~~challenged~~ ==> challenging

20 ~~moving fast~~ ==> fast-moving

**Advanced Grammar for IELTS: Adverbs – Diagnose Test,
Grammar Explanation & Practice Exercises**

A DIAGNOSTIC TEST: Adverbs

Underline the correct form or phrase in **bold**.

Example: I haven't seen that much of them **late/ lately**.

1. You're bound to be promoted; the boss thinks very **high/ highly** of you.
2. The elephant trek took us **deep/ deeply** into the rainforest.
3. In our school **fifty roughly/ roughly fifty** students have mobile phones.
4. As we descended the hill the car began to go more **fast/ faster**.
5. I've had a lot of insomnia recently. **I only slept yesterday/ Yesterday I only slept** four hours.
6. **Weekly I get paid/ I get paid weekly**, so I can pay the rent on Saturday.
7. **Here lies the tomb / The tomb here lies** of Sir Jasper Willoughby.
8. The train strike won't affect her, she **arrives usually / usually arrives** by taxi.
9. Liz isn't our most punctual member of staff, she **is often/ often is** late for work.
10. I'm afraid that we **still don't/ don't still** know his name.
11. You'll never get your money back because the company isn't **trading any longer/ any longer trading**.
12. My parents aren't very sociable, in fact they **go out hardly ever/ hardly ever go out**.
13. I'm sorry that the kids **badly behaved/ behaved badly** while you were babysitting.

Rewrite these sentences, putting the adverb in brackets in the correct position.

Example

She has got a place in the shortlist. (definitely)

==> *She has definitely got a place in the shortlist.*

14 I thought his performance was good. (pretty)

- 15 The patient's body is now entirely free of symptoms. (almost)
- 16 These days I take my health much more seriously. (probably)
- 17 She's my worst enemy and I don't like her. (really)
- 18 Rejected. Harriet turned to food for comfort. (emotionally)
- 19 I bumped into your brother at the supermarket. (incidentally)
- 20 I understood everything because the teacher answered the question. (clearly)

B GRAMMAR EXPLANATION: Adverbs

Adverbs are words which modify or give extra information about verbs, adjectives, other words or whole clauses. This unit examines the form and use of adverbs, including adverb pairs with very similar forms, as well as adverbs and adjectives with the same form. This unit also looks at the position of adverbs which modify verbs and at those adverbs which convey a viewpoint or attitude, or modify a whole sentence.

1. FORM

1A. Forms of adverbs

Some adverbs are not derived from other words, while others are formed by adding suffixes (e.g. -ly) to other words, or are formed from groups of words. These are some common examples of adverbs (note spelling):

not formed from other words	<i>just, well, soon, too, quite, still</i>
fixed phrases	<i>kind of, of course, at last</i>
formed from other words	
adjective + <i>-ly</i>	tragic => tragically, excitable => excitably, easy => easily, real => really
noun / preposition + <i>ward(s)/-wise</i>	home => homeward, after => afterwards, price => pricewise,
compounds	health => healthwise

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	some + times => sometimes
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1B. Confusing forms

In some cases adverbs have the same forms as adjectives; in other cases two different adverbs are derived from the same adjective:

Adverbs which have the same form as adjectives:

close, dead, fast, fine, long, low, pretty, short, straight, wide, wrong

Common adverbs from the same base, with different meanings:

<p>direct (= without stopping) We flew direct from La Guardia to Houston.</p> <p>late (= not on time/not early) The plane arrived late due to bad weather.</p> <p>high (= to a great height) He lifted it high over his head.</p> <p>hard (= with a lot of effort/ severely) He braked hard when he saw the cat.</p> <p>right (= direction/correctly) Turn right at the crossroads. Try to do it right this time!</p> <p>free (= without paying) We got into the concert free!</p> <p>deep (= to a great depth/distance) We explored deep into the jungle.</p>	<p>directly (= immediately/very soon) Don't go. I'll be with you directly.</p> <p>lately (= recently) She's been rather ill lately.</p> <p>highly (= extremely) Arsenic is highly toxic.</p> <p>hardly (= scarcely, almost not) We hardly know our neighbours.</p> <p>rightly (= correctly in my opinion) The tribunal rightly condemned the war criminals.</p> <p>freely (= without limitation or control) Sheep roam freely over the hills.</p> <p>deeply (= thoroughly) I'm deeply ashamed of my behaviour</p>
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Note: There are a few adjectives which look like adverbs, e.g. *friendly, lonely, cowardly*. We cannot make these adjectives into adverbs in the usual way. We use alternative words or phrases, or the adjective with *manner* or *way*:

X ~~*He left cowardlyly, sneaking out the back door.*~~

✓ *He left like a coward ...* ✓ *He left in a cowardly way ...*

We use some common adjectives as adverbs in informal conversational English, although some speakers consider this incorrect:

They sell things very cheap in that market.

In informal US English *real* and *good* can be used instead of really and well:

She's a real nice girl. The team's running good this season.

2. USE

2A. Modifying, and adding information

The most common use of adverbs is to modify adjectives; the adverb usually comes before the adjective:

I thought his answers were pretty good on the whole.

Some adverbs, e.g. *really, almost, quite, pretty*, can modify another adverb:

The French team did really well in the first round.

Certain adverbs, e.g. *quite, roughly, about, approximately*, can also modify following noun phrases, prepositional phrases and numbers:

Her news came as quite a shock

In our school roughly fifty students have mobile phones.

A key use of adverbs is to add information about the time, manner or place of an action or state described in a sentence:

He hit the ball hard and this time it flew into the back of the net.

Note that we can use noun phrases (this time) and prepositional phrases (into the back of the net) as adverbs.

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We can use adverbs with *as, so, too, enough*, etc.:

She performed so enthusiastically that the judges overlooked her inexperience.

We missed the bargains because we didn't get there soon enough

Some adverbs are used in conversation to show the speaker's attitude.

2B. Using adverbs in comparisons

We can use adverbs in comparatives and superlatives, usually with *more* and *most*:

In the lottery draw red balls seem to come up more frequently than yellow ones.

Of all the relatives at Gran's funeral I think Uncle Ralph felt her loss most deeply.

Adverbs which do not end in -ly take the same comparative and superlative forms as adjectives

If you tuned the engine more often the car would go faster.

Note that the comparative and superlative forms of the adverb *well* are *better* and *best*.

3. POSITION OF ADVERBS IN SENTENCES

3A. The three positions

The position of an adverb depends on its meaning and the word or phrase it is modifying. Adverbs which modify adjectives, other adverbs and noun phrases have fixed positions, but adverbs which modify a verb or add information about how, when or where something happens can take several positions in a sentence. We call these 'front position' (before the subject), 'mid position' (next to the verb) and 'final position' (after the object or complement):

These days I probably take my health much more seriously

front

mid

final

Note: If the object or complement of a verb is very long we can put a final position adverb before it:

These days I take much more seriously all those things I used to take for granted.

3B. Front position

We can use many adverbs in this position. We often use adverbs which link or contrast with information in the previous sentence:

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I've been incredibly busy this week. Yesterday I worked more than twelve hours.

After negative adverbs (e.g. never), or after adverbs of time and place followed by a verb of movement or position, we put the verb before the subject (inversion):

Never have I seen such a disturbing sight.

Here lies the body of our late lamented sovereign.

Note: We do not use adverbs of definite frequency, e.g. daily, weekly, in front position:

X Monthly I get paid. ✓ I get paid monthly

3C. Mid position

This is the usual position for adverbs of indefinite frequency, adverbs of degree, adverbs of certainty, one-word adverbs of time, *even* and *only*:

adverbs of indefinite frequency	always, frequently, generally, hardly ever, never, normally, occasionally, often, rarely, seldom, sometimes, usually
adverbs of degree	absolutely, almost, completely, entirely, just, hardly, partly, quite, rather, really, slightly, totally
adverbs of certainty	certainly, definitely, probably
one-word adverbs of time	already, finally, immediately, just, now, no longer, soon, still, then

With a simple verb we put the adverb between the subject and the verb, but with simple forms of *be* the adverb goes after the verb:

X She arrives always by taxi and she always is on time.

✓ She always arrives by taxi and she is always on time.

If there is a modal or auxiliary verb we put the adverb after the (first) auxiliary verb:

We've never been to the Creek islands. You can just see the coast.

Sea eagles have occasionally been seen around Loch Lomond.

These adverbs go after *do* or *not*:

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They don't really understand my point of view.

Note: But we put *sometimes, still, certainly, definitely and probably* before a negative auxiliary:

~~*X I don't sometimes understand his arguments. He hasn't still convinced me.*~~

✓ I sometimes don't understand his arguments. He still hasn't convinced me.

In spoken British English, if we want to emphasise an auxiliary verb or a simple form of *be*, we can put a mid-position adverb before it. The auxiliary/verb (underlined> is usually stressed:

*You really don't understand me at all! But she **never** is on time!*

Compare:

I don't really like him. (unmarked position = I slightly dislike him.)

I really don't like him. (emphatic position = I hate him.)

We can do this in US English even when we are not emphasising the verb:

Madonna never has been shy of image changes.

Note: We do not use other time adverbs (definite time or frequency) in mid position:

~~*X We every day buy our lunch at that sandwich bar on the corner.*~~

But we can do this in news reports:

The Federal Reserve today announced an immediate rise in interest rates.

3D. Final position

The most frequent position for adverbs in English is the end of the sentence. It is the usual position for *yet, a lot, any more, any longer, too, as well*:

~~*X They aren't any more selling it.*~~ *✓ They aren't selling it any more*

We usually put adverbs of manner (which describe *how* something is done) and adverbs of definite frequency in this position:

~~*X He well plays the guitar.*~~ *✓ He plays the guitar well.*

Adverbs of manner which end in *-ly* (except *badly*) can go in final or mid position:

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Harry painstakingly counted out the coins and arranged them neatly into piles.

Note: We don't use *hardly ever* or *never* in final position:

X They watch television hardly ever ✓ *They hardly ever watch television.*

Note: If we put *often*, *rarely* and *seldom* in final position, we must use *very* or *quite*:

X These days I eat desserts rarely ✓ *These days I eat desserts very rarely*

If there are several adverbs in final position, we usually follow a sequence of adverbs of manner, then place, and finally time:

The statue was lifted (carefully) (onto the plinth) (before the ceremony).

4. SENTENCE ADVERBS

4A. Viewpoint adverbs

Adverbs can describe the particular aspect of something we are commenting on:

Economically, the current government has been a resounding success. (= The government has successfully managed the economy.)

Although economically successful, the government is starting to lose popularity.

4B. Attitude/ sentence adverbs

Adverbs such as *clearly*, *honestly*, *obviously*, *surprisingly*, *understandably* can express our attitude towards an action:

You've obviously been eating too many sweets, young man! (This is a logical deduction which is clear to anybody.)

We can also use these adverbs in conversation to introduce, extend, or make a comment on a topic or opinion. We usually put these 'sentence adverbs' at the front or end of the sentence, separated by a comma:

Incidentally, I noticed they were looking for new players down at the Red Lion.

I don't think he knows what he's talking about, frankly.

Note: There are a number of these adverbs where the meaning is not always obvious:

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Adverb	Meaning
admittedly	-This probably qualifies or contradicts what I have just said/heard.
apparently	-This is something I believe to be true or have heard, although I'm not certain it is correct.
fortunately	-This is something positive which contrasts with something else I have said/heard. I am pleased about this.
Frankly	-This is my true opinion, although it may be shocking.
incidentally/ by the way	-I am changing the subject – this is some information which is not directly connected with the previous information.
understandably	-One can sympathise with this.

Note: Some adverbs, e.g. *naturally* and *clearly*, can be used as sentence adverbs and also as adverbs of manner. Note the different meanings:

*Despite being in a zoo, the animals behaved quite **naturally** (= in a natural way)*

***Naturally**, wild animals behave quite differently in captivity. (= what is expected)*

*The teacher answered the question **clearly** and precisely. (= in a clear way)*

***Clearly**, the teacher didn't answer the question. (This is obvious.)*

C PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

Underline the correct option in **bold**.

1. He slapped him **friendly/ in a friendly way** on the back.
2. Does that flight go **direct / directly** or is there a stopover?
3. Many of the senior staff are **right/ rightly** concerned about their pensions.
4. There's been a lot of talk about European integration **late/ lately**.
5. Our new cellphone fits **easy/ easily** into the average-sized pocket.

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6. The path leads **straight/ straightly** to the front door.
7. **Healthy/ Healthwise**, stress is probably the most serious problem facing people today.
8. Animals are now able to wander **free/ freely** throughout the game reserve.
9. In late spring the gulls nest **high/ highly** on the cliff face.
10. The remains of the Spanish galleon lie **deep/ deeply** under the ocean.
11. The minister will begin by giving a statement. **After/ Afterwards**, you will be able to put your questions to him directly.
12. Jackson came pretty **close/ closely** to winning that last race.
13. You'll never get better if you don't eat – you've **hard/ hardly** touched your dinner!
14. In the Denver play-offs the Miami team did **real/ good** well.
15. Some of these kids drive their cars far too **fast/ fastly**.

Q 2.

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence. You must use between three and six words, including the word given in bold. This word must not be altered in any way. The exercise begins with an example (0).

0 Karen did really well in the test. **highly**

==> Karen.....*was highly successful*.....in the test.

1 The car started to accelerate as we turned the corner. **go**

As we turned the corner the car.....

2 She really didn't expect to win so much money. **quite**

Winning so much money came surprise

3 Evolution is slower during periods of climatic stability. **happens**

Evolution during periods of climatic stability

4 We didn't get there in time to hear the overture. **soon**

We wanted to hear the overture but we didn't get

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5 More or less three-quarters of our students are fee-paying these days. **roughly**

These days our students pay fees

6 In the USA only a few people have heard of our products. **entirely**

Our products are in the USA

7 She gave such a moving performance that we were virtually in tears. **so**

She performed we were virtually in tears

8 Mr Skidmore had a deeper involvement than any of the other directors. **most**

Of all the directors, Mr Skidmore was

9 In terms of politics, I felt most of the participants were biased. **politically**

In my opinion most of the participants

10 I couldn't have made my answers to the questionnaire any more honest than I did. **as**

I answered the questionnaire I could.

Q 3.

Tick (✓) all those adverbs which can complete the sentences and cross (X) those that cannot. In one case none of the adverbs will fit.

1 Clarice opened the door to the secret compartment.

A slowly B last week C probably

2 We don't know the identity of the masked stranger.

A still B really C certainly

3 You can see the coast from this point.

A definitely B just C as well

4 Our next door neighbours go there

A as well B hardly ever C a lot

5 the boss gives me a hard time.

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A Every day B Daily C Sometimes

6 I get the feeling you haven't understood my point.

A entirely B really C probably

7 The public don't respond in the ways advertisers expect them to.

A sometimes B any longer C always

8 I haven't been to the cinema

A yet B often C very often

9 Alarming signs of radiation leakage have been reported around the power station.

A often B this week C always

10 have I been subjected to such outrageous demands.

A Never B Rarely C Frequently

11 I'm afraid the bank does not permit such large overdrafts.

A generally B any longer C any more

12. The patient reacts to any kind of bright light.

A badly B immediately C usually

13. He plays the saxophone

A too B quite rarely C never

14 The data from those sensors isn't reliable.

A absolutely B sometimes C always

15 She treats her children

A carefully B well C badly

Q 4.

Rewrite these sentences putting the words and phrases in brackets in the best order. Note that none of these sentences are emphatic. The exercise begins with an example (0).

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0 My parents (allowed/hardly ever) us to (late/on weekdays/stay up).

==>***My parents hardly ever allowed us to stay up late on weekdays***.....

1. Taking advantage of a gap between the players. Owen kicked the ball (into the net/just before half time/skillfully)
2. Foxes (often/be seen/can) scavenging (on the streets of London/at night).
3. David (well/behaves/quite) when he is at home but he (at school/causes trouble/often).
4. The post (arrive/sometimes/on time/doesn't) in this part of the city.
5. Jennifer (immediately/didn't/recognise) the man waving (at the end of the show/frantically/from the balcony).
6. We (unable/are/usually) to offer refunds on the spot, but we will examine (thoroughly/before the end of the week/your claim).
7. These children (never/have/given/been/probably) the opportunities we all take for granted.
8. Access to the Internet (no longer/is) available (on weekday mornings/free of charge/at our libraries).
9. Such losses (have/would/normally/avoided/been) by the use of back-up devices.
10. Many of the old masters had assistants who would prepare the oil pigments (each morning/by hand/in their studios)

Q 5.

Make the answers in these mini-dialogues more emphatic by rewriting them with the adverb in brackets in a suitable position. Make any other changes that are necessary. The exercise begins with an example (0).

0 'Lucy hasn't turned up yet again.' 'I know. She is unreliable, isn't she?' (really)

==> ***'I know. She really is unreliable, isn't she?'***

1. 'Admit it. You took that money out of the till.' 'I'm sorry. I don't know what you are talking about!' (really)
2. 'How ridiculous! They can't fit us in on Saturday because they're full.' 'But that place is full on Saturday evenings!' (always)

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3. 'Isn't it strange that he never mentions his wife. Don't you wonder why?' 'Yes, I have wondered about that.' (often)
4. 'Laurence won't even let us discuss your proposal.' 'I'm not surprised. He doesn't listen to my ideas.' (never)
5. 'How bizarre. The customs officer really went through my luggage with a fine-tooth comb!' 'That's not unusual; the customs officers are quite thorough.' (usually) –
6. 'You must have some idea of his whereabouts.' 'I'm sorry but we don't know where he is.' (honestly)
7. 'I think you should swallow your pride and apologise to them.' 'Come off it. You can't expect me to just cave in like that.' (really)
8. 'Take a break? Give yourself space? What are you on about?' 'You don't have a clue what I'm talking about, do you?' (absolutely)
9. 'Downloading that software seems to be taking an awfully long time.' 'I'm afraid these programs do take a long time to download.' (sometimes)
10. 'Look. It's midday and Tabitha still isn't here.' 'Well, she is in the office before noon these days.' (rarely)

Q 6.

Make this dialogue more natural by using suitable adverbs from the box to replace each of the expressions in **bold** (each adverb can only be used once and not all the adverbs will be needed).

admittedly	apparently	by the						
way	clearly	exactly	fortunately	frankly				
ideally	naturally	obviously	reasonably	really	still	seriously		
	understandably							

STEVE Not a bad party last night. Lots of old faces from college were there.

CLARE (1) **That sounds interesting; can you tell me more?**

STEVE Yeah. Lizzie was there with her new husband. (20) **This is something I've heard although it may not be true,** he's something very high up and important in the civil service.

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CLARE Yes, I've heard that too. (3) **This is my true opinion, although it may be shocking**, I never really expected her to marry anyone successful. She was always so scruffy and laid back. She was never into social status or anything like that.

STEVE (4) **It is a logical deduction** she's changed her outlook on life. I mean, she was very smartly dressed and she kept telling me all about how much money their new house had cost.

CLARE (5) **Do you expect me to believe that?**

STEVE Yes, she was really bragging about it.

CLARE Well she never used to be interested in money at all. (6) **This probably contradicts what I've just said** she did like eating out and travelling.

STEVE (7) **What I'm about to say isn't really related to what we've been discussing** your old flame Simon was at the party.

CLARE Was he? I haven't seen him for ages.

STEVE (8) **As one would expect** he couldn't stop asking me questions about you.

CLARE I think he still hopes that we might get back together one day.

STEVE (9) **That is completely accurate**

CLARE Well, not much chance of that! Oh, was that obnoxious old creep Douglas Jarrold there?

STEVE I'm afraid so. (10) **I'm pleased about this** he was right over the other side of the room so I didn't have to talk to him. He was trying to chat up Mary Bracknell. I can't think why.

CLARE (11) **This is obvious**, he still fancies her.

STEVE Maybe. She certainly wasn't very interested in him, (12.) **which one can sympathise with**

CLARE Strange how some people never change, isn't it?

Q 7.

Rewrite these sentences using all the adverbial expressions in brackets.

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0 The press office advised us not to discuss the matter, (before the conference/last week/publicly)

==> ***Last week the press office advised us not to discuss the matter before the conference.***

1. Ruined, the owner of the business agreed to sell the premises, (reluctantly/within the month/financially/rather)
2. There is nothing better than collapsing, (onto a sofa/probably/at the end of the day/lazily)
3. Controlled, this effective new drug can reduce blood pressure, (amazingly/within hours/carefully/dramatically)
4. We regret having to announce the suspension of all staff working in our subsidiary, (currently/under the circumstances/in San Diego/deeply)
5. We seem to get the chance to talk, (about these things/seriously/these days/rarely)
6. Many of my colleagues disapprove of my scheme to update the accounting procedures, (thoroughly/over the next quarter/unfortunately/in the sales department)

D ANSWER KEY FOR DIAGNOSTIC TEST

1. highly
2. deep
3. roughly fifty
4. faster
5. Yesterday I only slept
6. I get paid weekly,
7. Here lies the tomb
8. usually arrives
9. is often
10. still don't
11. trading any longer

12. hardly ever go out.
13. behaved badly
14. I thought his performance was pretty good.
15. The patient's body is now almost entirely free of symptoms.
16. These days I probably take my health more seriously.
17. She's my worst enemy and I really don't like her./ She's really my worst enemy and I don't like her.
18. Emotionally rejected, Harriet turned to food for comfort./ Rejected emotionally. Harriet turned to food for comfort.
19. Incidentally, I bumped into your brother at the supermarket.
20. I understood everything because the teacher answered the question clearly.

E ANSWER KEY FOR PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

1 in a friendly way

2 direct

3 rightly

4 lately

5 easily

6 straight

7 Healthwise

8 freely

9 high

10 deep

11 Afterwards

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12 close

13 hardly

14 real

15 fast

Q 2.

1 started to go faster (and faster)

2 as quite a

3 happens more slowly

4 there soon enough

5 roughly three-quarters of

6 almost entirely unheard of/unknown

7 so movingly that

8 (the) most deeply involved

9 were politically biased

10 as honestly as

Q 3.

1 A ✓ B X C ✓

2 A X B ✓ C X

3 A ✓ B ✓ C X

5 A ✓ B X C ✓

6 A ✓ B ✓ C X

7 A X B X C ✓

8 A ✓ B X C ✓

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- 9 A X B X C X
- 10 A ✓ B ✓ C X
- 11 A ✓ B X C X
- 12 A X B ✓ C ✓
- 13 A ✓ B ✓ C X
- 14 A ✓ B X C ✓
- 15 A ✓ B ✓ C ✓

Q 4.

(Note: These answers follow the guidelines for sequence in the Reference section)

1. Taking advantage of a gap between the players, Owen kicked the ball skillfully into the net just before half time.
2. Foxes can often be seen scavenging on the streets of London at night.
3. David behaves quite well when he is at home but he often causes trouble at school.
4. The post sometimes doesn't arrive on time in this part of the city.
5. Jennifer didn't immediately recognise the man waving frantically from the balcony at the end of the show.
6. We are usually unable to offer refunds on the spot, but we will examine your claim thoroughly before the end of the week.
7. These children have probably never been given the opportunities we all take for granted.
8. Access to the Internet is no longer available free of charge at our libraries on weekday mornings.
9. Such losses would normally have been avoided by the use of back-up devices.
10. Many of the old masters had assistants who would prepare the oil pigments by hand in their studios each morning.

Q 5.

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1 'I'm sorry. I really don't know what you are talking about!'

2 'But that place always is full on Saturday evenings!'

3 'Yes, I often have wondered about that.'

4 'I'm not surprised. He never does listen to my ideas.'

5 'That's not unusual, the customs officers usually are quite thorough.'

6 'I'm sorry but we honestly don't know where he is.'

7 'Come off it. You really can't expect me to just cave in like that.'

8 'You absolutely don't have a clue what I'm talking about, do you?'

9 'I'm afraid these programs sometimes do take a long time to download.'

10 'Well, she rarely is in the office before noon these days.'

Q 6.

1 Really?

7 By the way

2 Apparently

8 Naturally

3 Frankly

9 Exactly

4 Obviously

10 Fortunately

5 Seriously?

11 Clearly

6 Admittedly

12. understandably

Q 7.

1. Financially ruined, the owner of the business rather reluctantly agreed to sell the premises within the month.
2. There is probably nothing better than collapsing lazily onto a sofa at the end of the day/At the end of the day there is ...
3. Carefully controlled, this amazingly effective new drug can dramatically reduce blood pressure within hours/can reduce blood pressure dramatically within hours/this dramatically effective new drug can amazingly reduce.

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4. Under the circumstances we deeply regret having to announce the suspension of all staff currently working in our subsidiary in San Diego.
5. We rarely seem to get the chance to talk seriously about these things these days.
6. Unfortunately, many of my colleagues thoroughly disapprove of my scheme to update the accounting procedures in the sales department over the next quarter.

Advanced Grammar for IELTS: Nouns and noun phrases – Diagnose Test, Grammar Explanation & Practice Exercises

A DIAGNOSTIC TEST: Nouns and noun phrases

In each sentence, either one or both of the forms in **bold** is correct. Tick (✓) the sentences where both forms are correct. Underline the correct form in the others.

Mumps **is/ are** not too problematic if contracted in childhood, but can be dangerous in later life.

1. The **chair/ chairwoman** has just phoned to say she's been delayed in traffic.
2. For really good electric **pianos/ pianoes**, have a look in Marston's.
3. Corn circles are one of the strangest **phenomenons/ phenomena** of recent times.
4. Parliament consists of 653 **MP's/ MPs**, about two-thirds of whom belong to the Government.
5. For this dish, you need to weigh the ingredients carefully on the **kitchen scale/ kitchen scales**.
6. The Asthma Helpline will be able to give you **advice/ an advice**.
7. This checkout is for customers with **fewer/ less** than five items only.
8. He was hit on the head by **stone/a stone** and had to go to hospital.
9. The supermarket is doing a lot of different **fruit/ fruits** from the Far East at the moment.
10. The most exciting event for most British viewers in the Sydney Olympics **was/ were** the rowing finals.
11. The Society's President, against the wishes of the other founder members, **has/ have** agreed to the sale.
12. Bread and butter **is/ are** eaten with meals by most people in the North of England.
13. 'The Three Kings' **was/ were** a great success for George Clooney.
14. Have you thought about doing gymnastics? I think **it's/ they're** very good for you.
15. Recent events prove the saying that twenty-four hours **is/ are** a long time in politics.
16. The Council's team of social **workers is/ are** to be commended for their actions.
17. The United Nations **is/ are** sending a special envoy to the conflict zone.

18. I'll take you to the station if you give me **shout/ a shout** when you're ready.
19. **The attack on the Minister was/ The people attacked the Minister and it was** unprovoked and extremely vicious.
20. The first **outbreak/ breakout** of the epidemic was in Zaire in the 1980s

B GRAMMAR EXPLANATION: Nouns and noun phrases

English nouns generally present few problems for the advanced learner but some aspects of countability and noun-verb agreement can be problematic. This unit looks at these aspects, as well as at plural nouns and at the nominalisation of verbs into nouns.

1. BASIC POINTS

1A. Form and meaning

English nouns only change their form when they are plural and to show possession.

Nouns can be countable or uncountable, and concrete (*table, child, station, food, storm*) or abstract (*hope, responsibility, anger, efficiency, consternation*).

1B. Gender

Nouns do not have grammatical gender in English. Some have a 'natural' gender, e.g. woman = female, father = male. Most nouns for jobs do not imply a gender. To specify gender, we have to say, e.g. a woman doctor. However, some nouns for jobs and roles do refer to males or females, often by their suffix, e.g. businessman (male), manageress (female). It used to be common to use the -man suffix to refer to people of both sexes:

That's the view of Sheila Davison, chairman of the Institute of Public Relations.

A lot of people avoid this now, especially if referring to a woman, and prefer a form with no implicit gender, e.g. chair, or to match the suffix to the person, e.g. chairwoman:

That's the view of Sheila Davison, chair(woman) of the Institute of Public Relations.

2. SINGULAR AND PLURAL NOUNS

2A. Regular plurals

In writing, most English nouns form the plural with -s. This is true of nouns which end in most consonants (e.g. road -> roads, bag -> bags, town -> towns) and the vowels a and e (e.g. area -> areas, rope -> ropes). But note these variations:

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noun	plural form	Examples
ending in consonant + y:	+ ies	family => families, party => parties
BUT vowel + y:	+ s	tray => trays, monkey => monkeys
ending in -ch, -s, -sh, -x, -z:	+ es	watch => watches, boss => bosses, fox => foxes, waltz => waltzes ²
ending in consonant + o:	+es	potato => potatoes, hero => heroes ³
BUT vowel + o:	+s	radio => radios, video => videos

1 If the pronunciation of ch is /k/, add -s only: patriarch => patriarchs.

2 Note these exceptions of vowel + z: quiz => quizzes, fez => fezzes.

3 Some words ending in -o, especially words from other languages, take -s only: piano => pianos, photo => photos, kilo => kilos, adagio => adagios.

2B. Irregular plurals

English does not have very many irregular plurals. Here are some examples:

noun	plural	Examples
Ending in -f or -fe	usually + ves ¹	leaf => leaves, loaf => loaves
foreign nouns	varies according to origin of word:	Latin origin: terminus => termini, datum => data, vertebra => vertebrae Greek origin: crisis => crises, phenomenon => phenomena

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other irregulars	+ (r)en:	child => children, ox => oxen
	change of vowel:	women => women, foot => feet
	no change in plural:	sheep => sheep, craft => craft (e.g. boat)

¹ Several words ending in -f and all those ending -ff just take -s: chief => chiefs, belief => beliefs, cliff => cliffs. Some words ending in -f take either plural ending: scarf => scarfs/scarves. You can check irregular plurals in a dictionary.

You may sometimes see plurals formed with an apostrophe, especially with dates and abbreviations: *1960's*, *some CP's*. This is quite common and may be considered correct in informal writing, but it is considered incorrect in formal written English.

2C. Nouns with no singular form

Some English nouns are more common in the plural form. These occur in a number of categories:

- Clothing: *clothes, jeans, trousers, pyjamas, trunks, dungarees*
- Tools/equipment: *scissors, glasses (= spectacles), scales, handcuffs, pliers*
- Games: *dominoes, darts, cards, bowls*
- Subjects/activities: *physics, maths, politics, economics, aerobics, athletics*
- Other: *goods, whereabouts, remains, thanks, news, stairs, proceeds*

These nouns may have a singular form with a different meaning or as part of a compound noun: *a glass (e.g. wine glass), a pyjama party, a dartboard*

3. COUNTABLE AND UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS

3A. Use

Countable nouns are usually concrete nouns and they can be 'counted': *a computer, three computers*. Uncountable nouns cannot be 'counted': *oil, beauty, fruit*. We do not use *a/an* with uncountable nouns, and we do not make them plural:

~~X The Asthma Helpline will be able to give you an advice/some advices~~

✓ *The Asthma Helpline will be able to give you (some) advice*

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Note: There are some differences between British English and US English: accommodation (uncountable in British English / accommodations (countable in US English).

Some determiners change according to whether the noun is countable or not:

For good health we should eat a few vegetables every day, as well as a little fruit.

It is also advisable to drink less alcohol and eat fewer sweet things.

Noe: In informal English it is possible to use less rather than fewer with countable nouns, although many people consider this to be incorrect:

[You should eat less sweet things.] [There are less people here than yesterday.]

Less is always correct if it refers to a 'whole', e.g. a period of time:

The flight takes less than three hours (three hours = a period of time)

3B. Countable and uncountable meanings

Some nouns can be countable or uncountable, but have different meanings:

noun	countable meaning	uncountable meaning
<i>Coffee</i> ¹	<i>I'd love a coffee, please.</i> (= a cup of coffee)	<i>Do you drink coffee?</i> (= the liquid)
<i>Chicken</i> ²	<i>I'll buy a chicken for dinner tonight.</i> (= the whole bird)	<i>Would you like some chicken for dinner?</i> (= a part/the dish)
<i>Drawing</i> ²	<i>This is an amazing drawing by Leonardo.</i> (= a picture)	<i>My son is very good at drawing</i> (= the activity)
<i>Stone</i> ²	<i>Someone threw a stone at our window.</i> (= one item)	<i>In this flat landscape of scrub and stone ...</i> (= the material)

¹ This applies to all drinks: *tea/a tea, beer/ a beer, lemonade/ a lemonade*

² There are other examples of the same type as these, but not all nouns of the type can be both countable and uncountable: *a duck/duck, a fish/fish*, but not ~~*a beef, a pork, a painting/ painting, a sculpture/ sculpture*~~, but not ~~*an art, a poetry*~~: *a paper/ paper., a rock/rock*, but not ~~*a wool, a cotton*~~.

3C. Quantifying uncountable noun

We can refer to a specific example of an uncountable noun with determiner + countable noun + of + uncountable noun. Common countable nouns in this pattern are *piece* and *bit*:

The Council will remove two pieces of unwanted furniture if desired.

Did you hear that interesting bit of gossip about Susan?

Other common nouns used in this way are: *a slice of bread/meat/cheese/cake, an item of news/furniture/clothing, a lump of sugar/coal, a cup of coffee/tea.*

We can sometimes make an uncountable noun countable when we want to express ‘different types’ of the noun:

The wines of Australia are now of similar quality to many from France.

We can make some uncountable abstract nouns countable if we refer to a specific type of the noun, for example, *distrust* => *a deep distrust, a distrust of accountants*. This is common with nouns connected with emotions. We do not make these nouns plural:

Jealousy is an enormously destructive emotion.

She felt an incomprehensible jealousy when she saw him with her daughter.

4. AGREEMENT

4A. Subject + verb + object/ complement

In English the verb usually agrees with the subject even if the verb is separated from its subject by prepositional phrases, relative clauses, brackets or commas:

The petrol station across the road from the new shops has just cut its prices.

However, if the verb is a long way from the subject but is closer to a complement, it is possible to agree the verb with the complement. Compare:

The most exciting event was the rowing finals.

The most exciting event in the Sydney Olympics for most British viewers was/ were the rowing finals.

The same can apply after *what* used to introduce a relative:

What the Board needs to address now is/ are the terms of the redundancies.

4B. Two subjects/ Plural subjects + verb

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We usually use a plural verb with two subjects linked by *and* or *both ... and*:

Mum and Dad were hoping that you'd join them this evening.

Both the doctor and the surgeon have advised me to have my gall bladder out.

Note: However, we use a singular verb if we consider the two items as one concept:

~~*X Fish and chips are one of the most common English dishes.*~~

✓ *Fish and chips is one of the most common English dishes.*

Titles of books, films, etc. take a singular verb, even if they are plural nouns:

Hitchcock's film 'The Birds' is based on a story by Daphne du Maurier.

When we link two items by *or*, the verb usually agrees with the second of the items:

Either my brother or my parents are going to bring the sleeping bags.

4C. Noun ending in -s + verb

Some uncountable nouns end in -s but take a singular verb. These often concern illness (measles, mumps), sport (aerobics, gymnastics) or study (mathematics, politics):

German measles is a particularly dangerous illness for pregnant women.

Politics is a topic best avoided with people you don't know well.

Some nouns refer to one object divided into two parts and take a plural verb, e.g. scissors, trousers, scales:

Scissors are used to cut the jeans.

Note: A plural subject describing a single entity, e.g. measurement, can take a singular verb:

~~*X Two metres aren't particularly tall these days.*~~

✓ *Two metres isn't particularly tall these days.*

Twenty-four hours is a long time in politics.

4D. Collective noun + verb

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We can use either a singular or a plural verb with most collective nouns, i.e. nouns referring to a group of people, animals or things, e.g. *family, government, group, staff, team, band, class, jury*. A singular verb presents the collective noun as a 'whole' entity:

The family has agreed that the funeral should be held in Ireland.

A plural verb presents the noun as a group of individuals, e.g. family members:

The family are all gathering here for Christmas.

A large number of proper nouns fall into this category, e.g. the United Nations:

The United Nations has agreed to deploy a peacekeeping force.

The United Nations are in disagreement on this issue.

Note: Unlike British English, US English prefers a singular verb in these cases. In English we prefer to use a singular verb after a collective noun if we use *a/an* rather than *the*:

A team of inspectors is visiting the prison tomorrow afternoon.

A few collective nouns always take a plural verb, e.g. *cattle, police, people*:

The police are investigating his accusation of fraud.

An adjective used as a collective noun always takes a plural:

The middle-aged have a lot to offer employers, if only they would see it.

It is common to use a plural verb after nouns such as *the majority, a number, a couple*, when these are followed by *of* + a plural noun:

The majority of the people were pleased to see the government fall.

5. NOMINALISATION

5A. Verb => noun

It is possible to make verbs into nouns in English by adding a suffix, e.g. *-ion, -ment, -er*:
educate => education, establish => establishment, teach => teacher.

It is also possible to use many verbs as nouns, especially in informal English:

Can't you open that? Shall I give it a try?

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I'll take you to the station if you give me a shout when you're ready.

Note: This does not apply to every verb. It is best to check in a good dictionary. It is also possible to make nouns from multi-word verbs. The particle often (but not always) precedes the verb in the noun form:

The epidemic first broke out in Zaire. => The first outbreak of the epidemic ...

The plane took off very smoothly. => The takeoff was smooth.

The car broke down five kilometres from home. => The breakdown happened ...

5B. Verb phrase => noun phrase

It is sometimes more concise and elegant, especially in written English, to use noun phrases rather than verb phrases to express an idea:

- Verb phrase: *The committee decided to open the playground to all children. This was welcomed by the local schools.*
- Noun phrase: *The committee's decision/ The decision of the committee to open the playground to all children was welcomed by the local schools.*

The noun phrase is often made up of two nouns linked by a preposition:

verb phrase	noun phrase
They released the video in 1998.	The release of the video in 1998 ...
The law was amended last week.	The amendment to the law last week.
The war drained the country's resources.	The war was a drain on the country's resources.

An adverb in a verb phrase changes to an adjective if the verb is nominalised:

*The girl shouted **loudly** and attracted the attention she wanted.*

*The girl's **loud** shouts attracted the attention she wanted.*

C PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

Underline the correct words or phrases in **bold** to complete this article.

Cookery Corner

In today's Cookery Corner I'd like to address a request from Mrs Parkinson of Suffolk for (1) **an information/information** about which type of (2) **chocolate/chocolates** to use in cooking. Well, Mrs P, my (3) **advice is/ advices are** always to use the best possible chocolate you can find. It's the same principle as with (4) **wines/wine**: in cooking always use (5) **an equivalent quality/ equivalent quality** to what you eat or drink. With chocolate, the reason for this is that higher quality chocolate will always give your cakes and sweets (6) **better/ a better** taste. To judge the quality of chocolate, look at the amount of cocoa in the chocolate. Good quality chocolate has more cocoa solids and (7) **less sugar/ fewer sugars**. For the best taste choose chocolate with a high cocoa (8) **contents/ content** – never (9) **fewer than/less than** 10 per cent cocoa solids and as much as 80 per cent if possible. It goes without saying that you should also use other (10) **ingredient/ ingredients** of the highest quality, too. If, for example, you're using coffee in your chocolate recipe, always use (11) **a strong, fresh coffee /strong, fresh coffee**. If you're making (12) **a cake/cake**. Use the right kind of (13) **flours/ flour**, and always weigh the ingredients on your kitchen (14) **scale/ scales**. Believe me, if you follow these simple rules, the next time you bake a chocolate cake, there won't be (15) **a lump/ a slice** left over!

Q 2.

Read this draft of a newspaper article, then complete the rewritten sections of the article below with a noun or noun phrase. The first one is given as an example (0).

St Andrew's Hospital Trust has recently confirmed that a fresh wave of food poisoning has broken out in the Scottish resort, and this is alarming everyone who lives in the town. A spokesperson stated that the illness was not serious and could be easily treated. This reassured community leaders but they requested further reassurances that the authorities were doing everything within their control to contain the spread. The hospital authority has announced that it will investigate fully the causes of this epidemic. As a recent investigation into a similar outbreak concluded that the cause was poor meat hygiene in a local butcher's shop, local shopkeepers are concerned about what will come out of the pending investigation. The leader of the Shopkeepers' Association, Len Murphy, suggested that the source of epidemic might be hospital kitchens, which has angered hospital staff. The kitchen staff at the hospital have now called for a strike of hospital auxiliaries across the region, which is likely to have severe financial consequences for the health authority.

(0)..... by St Andrew's Hospital Trust of (1)..... of food poisoning in the Scottish resort has alarmed (2) A (3) that the illness was not serious and could be easily treated reassured community leaders, but they requested further reassurances that the authorities were doing everything within their control to contain the spread. The hospital authority has announced

(4) into the causes of this epidemic. As (5) of a recent investigation into a similar outbreak cited poor meat hygiene in a local butcher's shop as the cause, local shopkeepers are concerned about (6) of the pending inquiry. (7) by the leader of the Shopkeepers' Association, Len Murphy, that the source of the epidemic might be hospital kitchens has angered hospital staff. (8) by kitchen staff at the hospital for a strike of hospital auxiliaries across the region is likely to have severe financial consequences for the health authority.

Q 3.

Find fifteen more mistakes, or places where the style could be improved, in this text. Underline the mistakes and correct them. The exercise begins with two examples.

Snow Falling on Cedars

by David Guterson

1 *Snow Falling on Cedars* open in the courthouse of San Pedro, a small sleepy => opens
2 island off the Pacific coast of the north-west United States. Underneath the
3 courtroom windows, four tall narrow archs of a leaded glass, a drama which will
=> arches
4 divide the island's communitys are unfolding. The defendant stands erect in the
5 dock: the local press and the jurors – farmers, grocers, builders, fisher wives
6 – await the start of this trial. Kabuo Miyamoto is accused of the murder of Carl
7 Heine, a young fisherman. The alleged crime by a young man of Japanese
8 descent stirs up the emotions of the islanders and questions their believes and
9 their politic. It takes place in the 1950's, and not many years has passed since the
10 Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbour and the horrors of World War II. Although
11 the Japanese on San Pedro was eager to defend their adopted country against the
12 country of their ancestors, some people in the community were unable to forgive
13 Japan its role in the War. and the trial causes their deeply-held prejudices to

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- 14 surface.
- 15 *Snow Falling on Cedars* is not only one of the best mysteries of recent years,
- 16 but it raises issues which affects us all. However, it ends with a great optimism.
- 17 David Guterson has succeeded in combining the best from both classic and
- 18 populist American literatures into a spellbinding art. Buy and read this beautiful
- 19 novel.

Q 4.

Fill the gaps in these sentences with *a*, *an*, nothing (-) or the correct form of a suitable verb. If there are two possible answers, put both possibilities.

1. Have you put.....pepper in this dish? I like plenty of seasoning.
2. What he'd really like us to buy him for his birthdaysome new Nike trainers.
3. Rickets adisease caused by a deficiency of vitamin D.
4. I first felt the desire to visit Venice when looking atpainting by Canaletto.
5. You can't hold a classical concert in the village hall; the acousticsterrible!
6. A large number of police officers present at the demonstration last week in case of trouble.
7. At present 10,000 kilometrest he longest walking competition held in the Olympics.
8. 'What have we got for supper?' 'Salmon. I got huge fish at the fishmonger's for only five pounds.'
9. Either the twins or John, the eldest brother, going to make a speech at the Golden Wedding party.
10. My brother thinks that economics really interesting. I disagree.
11. Saudi Arabia, along with most of the oil-producing nations, voted to raise the price of crude oil again.
12. That band always had a reputation for performing better in the studio than live.

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13. Both my brother and sister lived in this town all their lives.
14. We developed passion for Baroque music at university.
15. Roast beef and Yorkshire pudding definitely still the favourite of many British people!

Q 5.

Finish each of the following sentences in such a way that it is as similar as possible in meaning to the sentence printed before it. The exercise begins with an example (0).

0 The drama school is always looking out for new talent.

The drama school is always on*the lookout for new talent*.....

1 I heard some fascinating news on the radio this morning.

I heard a fascinating

2 The police used handcuffs to restrain the aggressive young man.

Handcuffs

3 A few roads in the Brighton area have been affected by the recent floods.

A small number

4 OK. I'll call the bank tomorrow and check our balance.

1. I'll give

5 The medical profession considers that children eat too many sweet and fatty things today.

The medical profession considers that children should

6 It didn't take us ten minutes to get here from the station.

It took us

7 A lot of people have taken up our new offer, which has delighted us.

We have been delighted by the

8 We've got quite a lot of unwanted furniture since we moved to the smaller house.

We've got several

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9 The management expects all staff to attend the meeting tomorrow afternoon.

All staff

10 They should now address the questions of VAT and fuel tax.

What

11 A lot of the older men sit in cafes and play dominoes.

Dominoes

12 We launched the new women's magazine in April and it was a great success.

The

13 In a democracy the government is elected by the people.

In a democracy the people

14 The teachers were boosted by the fact that the parents agreed to help fund the new playground.

The teachers were boosted by the parents'

D ANSWER KEY FOR DIAGNOSTIC TEST

1 ✓

2 pianos

3 phenomena

4 MPs

5 kitchen scales

6 advice

7 fewer (less is possible only in informal English)

8 a stone

9 ✓ 25.3C

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- 10 ✓
- 11 has
- 12 is
- 13 was
- 14 it's
- 15 is
- 16 ✓
- 17 ✓
- 18 a shout
- 19 The attack on the Minister was
- 20 outbreak

E ANSWER KEY FOR PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

1 information	8 content
2 chocolate	9 less than
3 advice is	10 ingredients
4 wine	11 strong, fresh coffee
5 an equivalent quality	12 a cake
6 a better	13 flour
7 less sugar	14 scales
	15 a slice

Q 2 1 an outbreak

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2 the town's population/the townspeople/ the town's residents

3 A spokesperson's statement

4 a full investigation

5 the conclusion

6 the outcome

7 The suggestion/ A suggestion

8 The call

Q 3. Line 3 ~~a leaded glass~~ ==> leaded glass

Line 4 ~~communitys~~ ==> communities

Line 4 ~~are unfolding~~ ==> is unfolding

Line 5 ~~fisher wiles~~ ==> fisher wives

Line 8 ~~believes~~ ==> beliefs

Line 9 ~~politie~~ ==> politics

Line 9 ~~1950's~~ ==> 1950s

Line 9 ~~has passed~~ ==> have passed

Line 11 ~~was eager~~ ==> were eager

Line 13 ~~prejudicies~~ ==> prejudices

Line 15 ~~mysterys~~ ==> mysteries

Line 16 ~~which affects~~ ==> which affect

Line 16 ~~a great optimism~~ ==> great optimism

Line 18 ~~literatures~~ ==> literature

Line 18 ~~a spellbinding art~~ ==> a spellbinding work of art

Q 4.

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1-2 are/is	9 is
3 is/was	10 is
4 a	11 has
5 are	12 has/have
6 were	13 have
7 is	14 a
8 a	15 is

Q 5.

1. item/piece of news on the radio this morning.
2. were used to restrain the aggressive young man.
3. of roads in the Brighton area were affected by the recent floods.
4. the bank a call tomorrow and check our balance.
5. eat fewer sweet and fatty things.
6. less than ten minutes to get here from the station.
7. uptake of our new offer.
8. items/pieces of unwanted furniture since we moved to the smaller house.
9. are expected to attend the meeting tomorrow afternoon.
10. they should now address are/is the questions of VAT and fuel tax.
11. is played by a lot of the older men in cafés.
12. launch of the new women's magazine in April was a great success.
13. elect the government.
14. agreement to help fund the new playground.

**Advanced Grammar for IELTS: Comparison – Diagnose Test,
Grammar Explanation & Practice Exercises**

A DIAGNOSTIC TEST: Comparison

Nine of these sentences contain mistakes. Tick (✓) the correct sentences, then find and correct the mistakes.

Example: Which of these three houses is the ~~expensivest~~? ==>**most expensive**

- 1 Come on, you've got to admit she's much slimer than you!
- 2 She's always saying she's better looking than I.
- 3 Our cat Whiskers has been much more lively since we added vitamin supplements to her diet.
- 4 We felt the male character was realer than the female, who seemed very artificial.
- 5 'Which do you prefer, darling, the brown or the green?' 'Oh, the green is definitely the best.'
- 6 I'm most proudest of this one. I won it against really stiff competition.
- 7 The divorce has made him the most unhappy man in the street, don't you think?
- 8 That special diet has worked miracles. He's much less fat than he used to be
- 9 The eldest piece in the museum is this Egyptian amulet from the Third Dynasty.
- 10 Hasn't their eldest son just landed some sort of job in Seattle?
- 11 Our new social security scheme is lots more generous than the previous Government's.
- 12 Windsor Castle is the largest occupied castle of Britain
- 13 Things are about as worse as they can get.
- 14 Children these days seem to get ruder and ruder and ruder
- 15 I'm angrier than upset

Complete each sentence so that it means exactly the same as the preceding one. You must include the word(s) in brackets.

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Example: I predicted the weather would be very hot and I was right. (just as)

==> **The weather ...was just as hot as I predicted.....**

16 The Hyperlink modem is much faster than all the others in our catalogue. (by far)

Of all the modems.....

17 Jan and Lucy are equally good at tennis. (no).

Jan is Lucy at tennis

18 Getting a made-to-measure suit was much cheaper than I expected. (not nearly)

Getting a made-to-measure suit
.....

19 I couldn't open the lock because it was very cold. (that)

It open the lock.

20 He gets increasingly angry as he becomes more frustrated. (angrier)

The more he gets.

B GRAMMAR EXPLANATION: Comparison

Gradable adjectives can be used to make comparisons. The rules for the production of comparative and superlative forms of adjectives are generally straightforward but there can be difficulties with spelling, exceptions in use, and the different phrases which accompany them. This unit also describes ways of making comparisons without using comparative and superlative forms, e.g. with *like* and *as*.

1. COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVES

1A. Form and use

Hot Dog €1.50	Hamburger € 2.75
Fishburger € 2.75	Cheeseburger € 3.95

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We use comparative adjectives to compare two (or more) things or people, and superlative adjectives to distinguish one thing or person from a number of others. This table shows the forms of comparative and superlative adjectives and the basic patterns they are used in:

	comparative adjectives	superlative adjectives
<p>adjectives with one syllable:</p> <p>cheap</p> <p>ending in silent -e: <i>safe</i></p> <p>ending in a consonant + y: <i>dry</i></p> <p>ending in a single vowel + a single consonant: <i>big</i></p>	<p>adjective + -er (+ than).</p> <p>The hamburger is cheaper (than the cheeseburger).</p> <p>omit final -e: <i>safer</i></p> <p>change y to i: <i>drier</i></p> <p>double the final consonant: <i>bigger</i></p>	<p>the + adjective + -est:</p> <p>The hot dog is the cheapest</p> <p>omit final -e: <i>the safest</i></p> <p>change y to i: <i>the driest</i></p> <p>double the final consonant: <i>the biggest</i></p>
<p>adjectives with two or more syllables:</p> <p><i>expensive</i></p>	<p><i>more</i> + adjective:</p> <p>The hamburger is more expensive (than the hot dog).</p>	<p><i>the most</i> + adjective:</p> <p>The cheeseburger is the most expensive.</p>
<p>irregular adjectives</p> <p><i>good/ bad</i></p> <p><i>far</i></p> <p><i>old</i></p>	<p>better/ worse</p> <p>further/ farther</p> <p>older/ elder</p>	<p>the best/ worst</p> <p>furthest/ farthest</p> <p>oldest/ eldest</p>

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We can use *than* to introduce a clause after a comparative adjective:

Los Angeles is bigger than I expected it to be

We can use other phrases between a comparative adjective and a *than* clause:

Burgers were more expensive in this restaurant than in the others we visited.

Note: If the object of the comparison is a pronoun without a verb we usually use an object pronoun. If there is a verb we use a subject pronoun:

I [m taller than he.] ✓ I'm taller than him ✓ I'm taller than he is.

Note: When we have two or more adjectives with *more* in a list, we usually only use *more* once:

[Lester and Craves were more hardworking and more determined than the others.]

✓ Lester and Graves were more hardworking and determined than the others.

When we refer to a place or group we use 'in' not 'of' after superlatives.

*X New York is ~~one of the largest cities of the world.~~ ✓ ... **in** the world.*

*X He ~~s by far the cleverest student of his class.~~ ✓ ... **in** his class.*

But in formal English we can put an 'of' phrase at the beginning of the sentence, before the superlative.

Of the students in his class, he is the cleverest.

1B. Exceptions

There are some exceptions to the rules of form and the patterns of use listed above. One-syllable adjectives ending in -ed and the adjectives real, right and wrong form the comparative and superlative with *more* and *most* (they do not take -er and -est):

X I was ~~boreder than I was on the flight to Sydney.~~

✓ I was more bored than I was on the flight to Sydney.

Many two-syllable adjectives ending in -ly, -y, -ow, -r and -l and the adjectives *common*, *handsome*, *mature*, *pleasant*, *polite*, *simple* and *stupid* can have either *more* and *most* or -er and -est:

The photographer wanted something more lively (or livelier).

Your son needs to develop a maturer (or more mature) attitude to his work.

When we add a negative prefix to two-syllable adjectives ending in -y (e.g. happy -unhappy) they can still take -er and -est:

He's the unhappiest man in the world.

Note: In informal spoken English we sometimes use a superlative adjective when we are only comparing two things, especially if the two things make a set:

I've got two cars but the Mercedes is the best

1C. Irregular adjectives

We can use *elder* and *eldest* (instead of *older* and *oldest*) to talk about people's ages, especially people in the same family, but we can't use *elder* immediately after a verb:

Their eldest / oldest son went to Harvard. Mary is the eldest/the oldest.

X ~~*My sister is elder (than me).*~~ ✓ *My sister is older (than me).*

Note that we don't use *elder* and *eldest* to talk about the age of things:

X ~~*This is the eldest house in the street.*~~ ✓ *This is the oldest house in the street.*

We use *further* or *farther* to talk about a 'greater distance':

John's house is the farther one.

I've moved further away from my parents. (= a greater distance away)

Note: We use *further* (not *farther*) with the meaning of 'extra' or 'more':

Let me know if you have any further questions. (= extra/more)

1D. Emphasis and strength

Most one-syllable adjectives can also form the comparative and superlative with *more* or *most* instead of -er or -est. We usually use this form for emphasis in spoken English:

You should be more proud of the things you've already achieved. (= prouder)

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I think this is the one she is the most proud of. (= proudest)

Comparatives can be made stronger or weaker by inserting a word or phrase in front of them:

- Stronger: even, (very) much, far, a lot, lots (informal), considerably, a great deal (formal) + comparative:

The cheeseburger's even more expensive than the fish burger.

- Weaker: a little, slightly, a bit (informal), somewhat (formal) + comparative:

The hot dog's a bit cheaper than the hamburger.

We can make a superlative weaker or stronger in the same way.

- Stronger: by far, easily (informal) + superlative:

He's by far the cleverest student in his class. (= He is much cleverer than the others.)

She's easily the best programmer in the company. (informal) (= She is much better than the others.)

- Weaker: one of, some of + superlative:

New York is one of the largest cities in the world. (= There may be some larger.)

1E. Equality

To say that two things are equal we can use patterns like *is + no + comparative* or *is not + any + comparative*:

The fishburger is no more expensive than the hamburger. (= They are the same price.)

The fishburger isn't any cheaper than the hamburger. (= They are the same price.)

1F. less and least

We use *less* and *least* as the opposite of *more* and *most*. We use these words with all adjectives including one-syllable adjectives:

I prefer the paisley pattern; it's less bold than the others.

The hot dog is the least expensive.

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Note: But in informal English we usually prefer to make negative comparisons of this kind with *not as ... as*:

I prefer the paisley pattern; it isn't as bold as the others.

2. ADJECTIVES WITH AS, SO, TOO, ENOUGH AND SUCH

2A. as.....as

We can say that two things are equal by using *as + adjective + as*.

The hamburger is as expensive as the fishburger.

We make this comparison more emphatic with *just*:

We really shouldn't have gone; it's just as bad as I predicted it would be!

To say that things are almost equal we use *just about, about, almost or nearly*.

I've had just about as much as I can take.

She's nearly as old as I was when I got married.

2B. not as....as

We make a negative comparison with *not as/ so + adjective + as*.

The hot dog isn't as expensive as the hamburger. (= The hot dog is cheaper.)

We can modify this comparison with *nearly or quite*:

The hot dog isn't nearly so expensive as the cheeseburger. (= It is much cheaper.)

The hot dog isn't quite as expensive as the hamburger. (= It is slightly cheaper.)

In informal spoken English we can use *not anything like, nothing like or nowhere near + as + adjective*:

The fishburger isn't anything like as expensive as the cheeseburger.

The fishburger's nothing like (or nowhere near) as expensive as the cheeseburger.

2C. so, too and enough

We use another type of ‘comparison’ when we describe the result of a particular quality or characteristic. We can use several structures:

- so + adjective + [that] clause:

I'm afraid I can't identify her. It was so dark (that) I couldn't see her face. (= It was very dark. The result was that I couldn't see her face.)

- too + adjective (+ for/to phrase):

It was too dark (for me) (to see her face).

- (not) adjective + enough (+ for/ to phrase):

It wasn't light enough (for me) (to see her face).

A more formal alternative to these forms is so + adjective + as to phrase:

It was so dark as to make it impossible to see her face.

2D. as and such

We can use *as and such* to introduce a comparison. There are two patterns:

- as + adjective + a + noun + as:

It wasn't as bad a result as I'd expected. (= it was a better result than I'd expected.)

- such a + adjective + noun + as (or that clause):

It wasn't such a bad result as I had expected.

It was such a dark night that I couldn't really see her face.

3. OTHER TYPES OF COMPARISON

3A. Progressive comparison

We can describe how something increases or decreases by repeating the same comparative two or sometimes three times, putting *and* between the forms:

Her visits to the country to see her son became rarer and rarer (= increasingly rare)

As the illness progressed the patients grew more and more detached from reality.

Marching into the sunset, the figures became smaller and smaller and smaller

3B. Combined comparison

To describe how a change in one thing causes a change in another, we can use two comparative forms with *the*. Note the use of the comma after the first clause:

The longer you leave it, the worse it'll get.

We sometimes omit the verb *be* in the clauses:

The more sophisticated the product, the more substantial the potential profit.

3C. Contrastive comparison

When we contrast two related qualities, we always use *more* (not *-er*):

X ~~*I'm sadder than disappointed.*~~ ✓ *I'm more sad than disappointed.*

Her eyes are more green than grey.

We can also use *not so much ...as* or *rather than*:

I'm not so much disappointed as sad.

Her eyes are green rather than grey.

3D. like and as

We often describe something by comparing it to something else which has similar qualities. These comparisons are known as 'similes'. There are two forms:

- as + adjective + as:

Listening to her was about as interesting as watching paint dry.

(In informal English we sometimes omit the first *as*: *She looks white as a sheet.*)

- like + noun or verb phrase:

The cruise ship was like a skyscraper lying on its side

There are many idioms in which we use these two patterns:

You 're as white as a sheet: I think you'd better see a doctor.

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I feel full of energy today – I slept like a log last night.

Note: We use *like* (not *as*) before a noun when we are making a comparison between two things which seem similar:

X ~~*You look as a man who's seen a ghost!*~~ ✓ *You look like a man who's seen a ghost!*

When Mike puts on his dark suit he looks like a waiter (= He resembles a waiter.)

Note: We use *as* (not *like*) before a noun when we are describing someone's job, role or identity, or something's function:

X ~~*Simon's working like a waiter during the summer vacation.*~~

✓ *Simon's working as a waiter during the summer vacation.* (This is his job.)

Use your payroll number as a password for the computer. (This is its function.)

Note: We can also describe something by comparing it with something similar without using *like* or *as*, this is known as a 'metaphor':

We hope the new treaty will form a bridge between our two nations. (a bridge = metaphor for a link)

Metaphors are common in poetry and literary English:

Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines. (eye of heaven = metaphor for the sun)

C PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

Fill the gaps with appropriate comparative and superlative forms of the adjectives in the box. Add *than* and *the* if necessary.

dry	keen	fat	bored	good	loose	real	safe	tidy	bad	big
pretty	wet	scared	wrong	far						

0 I'm rather worried about the side effects of aspirin. Can you recommend a ...*safer*.... alternative?

1 And now we come to the award for actor in a leading role.

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- 2 It's been raining non-stop. I wouldn't be surprised if this turns out to be July on record!
- 3 The authenticity of dialogue and setting often makes low-budget films seem the somewhat artificial version of reality in Hollywood movies.
- 4 In medieval times people rarely travelled long distances. For most peasants they would ever travel would be to the local market town.
- 5 In our study children on a diet high in dairy products tended to be considerably average.
- 6 Now that I'm employing a cleaner the house has become a lot it ever used to be!
- 7 This skirt's much too tight on the hips. I need something with a fit.
- 8 DiCaprio was awful! I think that's performance I've ever seen him give.
- 9 I don't mind the Mediterranean summer because it's a heat than you find in the tropics.
- 10 They say the great pyramid at Giza is structure to survive from the ancient world.
- 11 I like all Mozart's operas but I think Don Giovanni is the one I am on.
- 12 We inherited two paintings from my grandmother. Of the two, I'd say the landscape is
- 13 I know all murder is wrong, but don't you agree that it's to murder a child than to murder an adult?
- 14 I've ever felt was when Joe and I were flying over the Himalayas and we hit a storm; it was absolutely petrifying.
- 15 That play was so tedious. I was watching that than I was when I spent three hours trapped in that lift last year!

Q 2.

Match each sentence (1-7) with a sentence with the same meaning from A-G.

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1 It's slightly cheaper	A It's considerably more expensive
2 It's much cheaper.	B It's the least expensive.
3 It isn't anything like as cheap	C It's more expensive.
4 It's just as cheap.	D It's somewhat less expensive.
5 It's by far the cheapest.	E It's no more expensive.
6 It isn't quite as cheap.	F It's slightly more expensive.
7 It isn't as cheap.	G It's nothing like as expensive.

Q 3.

Tick (✓) the best explanation, A or B.

1 The prices on the menu aren't nearly as expensive as I expected.

A Prices are a little cheaper than I expected.

B Prices are much cheaper than I expected.

2 It looks as if your new car isn't any more reliable than the old one!

A Both cars are equally unreliable.

B The new car is slightly less reliable than the old one.

3 Of all the teams in the league, theirs is the least successful.

A Their team is the most unsuccessful.

B Their team is less successful than some of the others.

4 They said it was one of the most powerful earthquakes ever.

A No other earthquake was as powerful.

B There may have been more powerful earthquakes.

5 The new tax regulations are somewhat more rigorous than last year's.

A The new regulations are much more rigorous than last year's.

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B Last year's regulations were slightly less rigorous.

6 I have to say that the hotel wasn't quite as luxurious as the brochure claimed.

A The hotel was much less luxurious than the brochure claimed.

B The hotel was slightly less luxurious than the brochure claimed.

7 This is by far the best seat in the plane. There's loads of legroom.

A No seat in the plane is better.

B Other seats may be equally good.

8 She isn't anything like as snobbish as you said.

A She is less snobbish than you said.

B She isn't snobbish.

9 I'm afraid your figures are no more accurate than the ones Rachel gave me.

A Your figures are less accurate than Rachel's.

B Your figures and Rachel's figures are equally inaccurate.

10 As far as Daniel's job is concerned, things are about as bad as they can be.

A Daniel's job could get worse.

B Daniel's job couldn't be any worse than it is.

Q 4.

Complete each sentence so that it means the same as preceding one(s). Use the words in brackets but do not change the words given in any way.

0 As students get closer to their exams they become more nervous. (the ... more)

==> The closer students... ***gets to their exams, the more nervous they become***

1 The lecture was very boring. As a result I fell asleep. (so ... that)

The lecture
.....

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2 The tickets sold out within days because the concert was so well publicised. (such ... that)

It was

3 The wording of the document is very complicated. It's incomprehensible. (so ... as to)

The wording of the document

4 I couldn't find my contact lens because it was very dark. (too)

It was
.....

5 My friends claimed that the exhibition was interesting but I found it pretty dull. (exhibition)

It wasn't as
.....

6 She's slightly angry but she's very disappointed. (than)

She's
.....

7 Approaching the church, we noticed the sound of the bells becoming increasingly loud. (and ... and)

Approaching the church, we noticed the sound of the bells
.....

8 As dogs get older they become less aggressive. (the less)

The older dogs
.....

9 My son can't get a place at kindergarten because he's too young. (enough)

My son isn't
.....

10 Their remarks were only slightly insulting, but they were extremely inaccurate. (not so much)

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Their remarks
.....

Q 5.

Match the situations (1-15) with the similes (A-P). Then use the similes to rewrite the sentences. You may need to use a good dictionary for this exercise.

A	like a cat on a hot tin roof	I	like hot cakes
B	like a trooper	J	as a fiddle
C	like a lamb to the slaughter	K	as a feather
D	like a bull in a china shop	L	as ice
E	like a bear with a sore head	M	as the grave
F	like a log	N	as a sheet
G	like a chimney	O	as a mule
H	like a rocket	P	as the hills

0 Stonehenge is incredibly ancient, more than 4,000 years old.

==> (P) *Stonehenge is as old as the hills*

- 1 She's a heavy smoker.
- 2 He's incredibly clumsy and often breaks things.
- 3 I slept really soundly last night.
- 4 It's absolutely freezing in here!
- 5 She so naive, she doesn't realise what a dangerous situation she's going into.
- 6 My grandmother may be 85 but she's incredibly fit and healthy.
- 7 Do you feel all right? You're very pale.
- 8 He's terribly nervous, he can't keep still for a moment.
- 9 She's in a foul mood this morning, shouting at and arguing with everyone.

- 10 Our new car goes really fast.
- 11 My new flatmate never stops swearing.
- 12 Once the lights were out the dormitory became eerily quiet.
- 13 She doesn't need to diet, she weighs hardly anything!
- 14 Once the old man has made his mind up he never changes it, whatever you say.
- 15 These new mobile phones are selling amazingly well.

Q 6.

Complete the following article. Use only one word for each space (1-20). Read through the whole text before you begin writing. The exercise begins with an example (0).

CONSUMER REPORT

HAIR CONDITIONERS

For this week's consumer test we've been looking at the (0)...*most*...popular choices of competing hair conditioner. We chose the three (1)... –selling brands: Supremesoft, Vitabalm and ActiveShine, and gave them to our panel of ordinary consumers to try for a month.

Supremesoft **

At \$2.99 for 250ml Supremesoft is the (2)..... expensive of the three brands. But, surprisingly, price is no guide to quality as this brand was (3) more effective (4) the cheaper brands. On the other hand, the panel felt the packaging was (5) upscale than the competitors, and the conditioner itself had an attractive colour and scent. But these advantages weren't significant (6) to compensate for the extra cost.

Vitabalm *

Vitabalm is the (7)..... of the tested brands (\$1.99 for 250ml). Our consumers thought the packaging wasn't (8)..... attractive (9) the others and the conditioner had what one tester described as 'a rather chemical smell'. It was (10) as effective as the others in dealing with tangled hair, but testers with dry hair found that it wasn't rich enough (11) give their hair any extra body. And everyone agreed that it was (12) harsh to be useable on a daily basis.

ActiveShine ***

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This brand emerged as the (13)..... all-round value for money. It had a strong smell, rather (14) an antiseptic cream, but the smell was not (15)..... strong as to be off-putting. Testers found that it was just as effective with greasy hair as with dry hair and it was (16)..... far the most successful with flyaway hair. ActiveShine doesn't have (17) a rich composition as Supremesoft, but our testers found that (18)..... more they used it, the (19) noticeable the effect on their hair, so it was considered to be just as effective (20)..... the others in the long term.

So, at around \$2.50 for 250ml ActiveShine receives this month's three-star rating.

D ANSWER KEY FOR DIAGNOSTIC TEST

- 1 ~~slimer~~ ==> slimmer
- 2 ~~than I~~ ==> than me/ than I am
- 3 ✓ (but also much more lively ==> much livelier)
- 4 ~~realer~~ ==> more real
- 5 ✓
- 6 ~~most proudest~~ ==> proudest/ the most proud
- 7 ✓ (but also the most unhappy ==> the unhappiest)
- 8 ✓
- 9 ~~eldest~~ ==> oldest
- 10 ✓
- 11 ~~lots~~ ==> a lot/considerably/ much/a great deal/even/far more
- 12 ~~of~~ ==> in
- 13 ~~worse~~ ==> bad
- 14 ✓
- 15 ~~angrier~~ ==> more angry
- 16 Of all the modems (in our catalogue), the Hyperlink is by far the fastest/the fastest by far.

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- 17 Jan is no better/ Jan is no worse than Lucy at tennis.
- 18 Getting a made-to-measure suit was not nearly as expensive as I expected.
- 19 It was so cold that I couldn't open the lock.
- 20 The more frustrated he becomes, the angrier he gets.

E ANSWER KEY FOR PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

1. the best	8. the worst
2. the wettest	9. drier
3. more real than	10. the biggest
4. the furthest/ farthest	11. (the) most keen/ keenest
5. fatter/ bigger than	12. the prettier/ prettiest
6. tidier than	13. more wrong
7. looser	14. The most scared
	15. more bored

Q 2.

1 D 2 G 3 A 4 E 5 B 6 F 7 C

Q 3.

1 B 2 A 3 A 4 B 5 B

6 B 7 A 8 A 9 B 10 B

Q 4.

1. The lecture was so boring that I fell asleep.
2. It was such a well-publicised concert that the tickets sold out within days.

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3. The wording of the document is so complicated as to be incomprehensible.
4. It was too dark to find my contact lens.
5. It wasn't as interesting an exhibition as my friends had claimed.
6. She's more disappointed than angry.
7. Approaching the church, we noticed the sound of the bells becoming louder and louder and louder.
8. The older dogs get, the less aggressive they become.
9. My son isn't old enough to get a place at kindergarten.
10. Their remarks were not so much insulting as inaccurate.

Q 5.

1. G She smokes like a chimney.
2. D He's like a bull in a china shop.
3. F I slept like a log last night.
4. L It's as cold as ice in here.
5. C She's like a lamb to the slaughter.
6. J She's as fit as a fiddle.
7. N You're as white as a sheet.
8. A He's like a cat on a hot tin roof.
9. E She's like a bear with a sore head this morning.
10. H Our car goes like a rocket.
11. B My new flatmate swears like a trooper.
12. M Once the lights went out it was as quiet as the grave.
13. K She doesn't need to diet, she's as light as a feather.
14. O The old man is as stubborn as a mule.

15. I These new mobile phones are selling like hot cakes.

Q 6.

1 best/top	11 to
2 most	12 too
3 no	13 best
4 than	14 like
5 more	15 so
6 enough	16 by
7 cheapest	17 such
8 as	18 the
9 as	19 more
10 just/almost/about	20 as

A DIAGNOSTIC TEST: Contrast

Fourteen of these sentences contain a mistake. Tick (✓) the correct sentences, then correct the mistakes. (Some of the mistakes are in word order and level of formality.)

We didn't have a lot of success with the garden, despite we worked hard on it.

.....*We didn't have a lot of success with the garden, although we worked hard on it*.....

1. I'm Gemini even though my mother is Capricorn
2. My partner enjoys adventure holidays, whereas I prefer to laze on a beach.
3. But they'd travelled round the world, they had little experience of their own country.
4. Although the watch looked just like a Rolex, it had cost only \$50 in a market in Hong Kong
5. The girl was released from prison, she had served although only a fraction of her sentence

6. Even although there was a Force 9 gale, the ship remained stable.
7. Visitors to tropical resorts still stay out in the sun too long, even they have had plenty of warning about the dangers of the sun's rays.
8. These exclusive villas are only a five-minute walk from the busy centre of the resort. They are a haven of peace and tranquillity yet.
9. Her face, although deathly pale, was as stern as ever.
10. Ideal the house may appear at first sight, be sure to have a full structural survey.
11. In spite of he had a full course of driving lessons, he failed the test four times.
12. Despite she was a woman, Marie Curie made a successful career for herself in a male-dominated world.
13. Despite having to do it in the dark, we managed to pitch the tent without problems.
14. Although the fact that the machine was under guarantee, the company refused to replace it.
15. We had a really horrible flight back – it was terrifying. The plane was all over the place and people were throwing up everywhere and screaming. Nonetheless, we got back safely.
16. However a dog may be a good companion for the elderly, the need to take it for walks may be a disadvantage.
17. Australian wines have long impressed European wine lovers. Australian, by contrast, champagne is a relative newcomer.
18. Most people appreciate the damage being done to the environment by cars. They won't stop using their own vehicles, however.
19. The new designs are not as innovative as the competition. They will certainly be popular as they are realistically priced, still.
20. The plumber charged \$100 for an hour's work. He did a good job, mind you.

B GRAMMAR EXPLANATION: Contrast

English can express contrasts: with conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions. Knowing exactly how to use each type of contrast is one of the more advanced points of English. This unit looks at the most common ways of contrasting information.

1. CONJUNCTIONS OF CONTRAST

1A. Expressing difference

A contrast between two clauses can be one simply of difference between the ideas expressed in them. The most common way of expressing a simple difference in English is with *but*:

Life expectancy in Japan is now over 80 but it is several years lower in the UK.

Other conjunctions which express simple differences are *while*, *whereas* and *whilst*. *While* is more informal than *whereas*; *whilst* is very formal:

Reds and yellows are warm colours, whereas blues and greens are cool.

While only 84 people died on the railways last year, more than 5.000 died on the roads.

We can put a clause starting with *while*, *whilst* or *whereas* either before or after the main clause, but a clause starting with *but* has to come second:

I've got two sisters, while my best friend has got two brothers.

While I've got two sisters, my best friend has got two brothers.

~~*X But I've got two sisters, my best friend has got two brothers.*~~

✓ *My best friend has got two brothers but I've got two sisters.*

The clause introduced by the conjunction is usually the one which carries more emphasis or introduces something new to the discourse.

Note: We always separate clauses with *while*, *whereas* and *whilst* with a comma. This is not usually necessary when we use *but*.

1B. Expressing opposition or surprise

There is another type of contrast in English, where the idea of one clause is in some way opposing the idea of the other, and which often expresses an element of surprise. For example, we may feel that it is surprising to pay a lot of money for a meal in a restaurant and to find that the food is awful, or to fail an exam after studying hard:

Although we paid an enormous amount of money for the meal, the food was terribly disappointing.

Derek failed the exam but he had studied really hard for it.

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Derek failed the exam, although he had studied really hard for it.

We use the conjunctions *but*, *(al)though* and *even though* to introduce the fact or idea in opposition to information in the main clause.

Note that the subordinate clause can precede the main clause:

Although he had studied really hard for the exam, Derek failed it.

Note: Remember that *but* does not introduce a subordinate clause and that a clause starting with *but* cannot precede the other clause in the sentence:

~~*X But he had studied really hard for the exam, Derek failed it.*~~

It is often possible to start either clause in a sentence with a conjunction, depending on which clause has the information we consider ‘surprising’ and which we want to focus on. Compare these examples:

Little is known about the artist’s early life although a lot has been found out about his later life.

A lot has been found out about the artist’s later life, although little is known about his early life

In the first example, the writer probably feels that it is surprising that a lot is known about the artist’s later life when little is known about his early life, but in the second, it is the lack of knowledge about the artist’s early life which is surprising.

Though is a more informal alternative to *although*:

I enjoyed the exhibition, though I thought it was rather badly organised.

Even though adds emphasis to the subordinate clause:

Psychosis is also part of this debate, even though problems arising from it affect a relatively small number of people.

Note: Do not use *even although* or *even* by itself:

~~*X She loves him, even although he is violent.*~~

~~*X She loves him, even he is violent.*~~

✓ *She loves him, even though he is violent.*

Note: Do not confuse *even though* and *even if*:

I'm going to apply for the job, even though it pays very little. (fact)

I'm going to apply for the job. even if it pays very little. (I don't know what it pays.)

A more formal conjunction of contrast is *yet*.

These exclusive villas are only a five-minute walk from the busy centre of the resort, yet they are a haven of peace and tranquillity.

1C. Other patterns with *although*, *even though* and *though*

We can use these conjunctions with an adjective instead of a clause:

The necklace, even though (it was) staggeringly expensive, would match the dress perfectly.

Though exhausted after the drive home, Shelley cooked a meal for them all.

Her face, although deathly pale, was as stern as ever.

We can use *though* after an adjective, with verbs such as *be*, *look*, *seem*:

Beautiful though she is, you must be sure that you love her for herself.

Compare this with the use of *although* as a conjunction:

Although she is beautiful, you must be sure that you love her for herself.

We can use *though* at the end of a sentence to make a contrast with the sentence that precedes it

2. PREPOSITIONS OF CONTRAST

We can use the prepositions *despite* and *in spite of* to express contrast. They are more formal than (al)though:

Despite the depressed gold price, mine production rose in most areas last year.

As these are prepositions, they do not introduce clauses:

~~*X In spite of she saw me in the car, she didn't wave or say hello.*~~

✓ *Although she saw me in the car, she didn't wave or say hello.*

~~*X Despite the plane left an hour late, we arrived at our destination on time.*~~

✓ *Though the plane left an hour late, we arrived at our destination on time.*

These prepositions can be followed by a noun or an -ing form:

Despite often offering poor conditions and basic salaries, charities rarely have problems in recruiting staff.

To introduce a clause with *despite* or *in spite of*, we have to add *the fact that*:

In spite of the fact that the final rehearsal had gone so badly, the first night was a great success.

3. ADVERBS OF CONTRAST

3A. Formality

We can use sentence adverbials, e.g. *however*, *nevertheless*, *still*, *on the other hand*, *on the contrary*, to make a contrast between sentences, but mainly in more formal speech and writing:

A dog may be a good companion for the elderly. However, the need to take it for walks may be a disadvantage.

Nevertheless/ nonetheless is more formal than however.

The new version of Windows is not problem-free. Nevertheless, it is still an improvement on the previous one.

We use commas to separate these adverbials from the sentence.

We use *even so* in the same way, often to express a particularly surprising contrast:

The last attempt to swim the Channel ended in disaster. Even so, more swimmers than ever are training to achieve this difficult feat.

More informal adverbs of concession are *still*, *all the same* and *mind you*:

Our latest designs are not really as innovative as the competition. Still, they will certainly be popular, as they are realistically priced.

I know it's not late. I have to go, all the same.

The new programme about dinosaurs is a bit far-fetched. Mind you, it's a lot more interesting than most of the other programmes on TV right now.

3B. Position

All of the adverbs of contrast can be placed at the beginning of the contrasting sentence:

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One way of selecting candidates is a written editorial test. On the other hand, an informal interview can often be more informative.

We can also put them after the subject or verb of the contrasting sentence:

Little is known about Shakespeare's early life in Stratford. His years in London, however, are well documented./ ... are, however, well documented.

The adverb *though* can be put at the end of the contrasting sentence:

We haven't had a lot of success with the garden this year. The weather was much hotter than usual, though.

Nevertheless and *nonetheless* are not commonly used at the end of a sentence; we tend to use them at the beginning of the sentence. But we often use even so at the end of a sentence. Look at these examples:

Last year the government turned away more asylum seekers than ever before.

=> *Nonetheless, the public considers that too many are allowed to stay.*

=> *The public, however, considers that too many are allowed to stay.*

=> *The public considers that too many are allowed to stay, even so.*

The informal adverb *still* can appear at the beginning of the sentence, but not the end, and *all the same* and *mind you* are common at both the beginning and the end:

I know it's far too expensive for someone on my income.

=> *Still, it's worth it!*

=> *All the same, it's worth it!*

=> *It's worth it, all the same!*

=> *Mind you. It's worth it!*

=> *It's worth it, mind you!*

C PRACTICE EXERCISE

Combine each sentence in A with a suitable contrasting sentence from B, using the conjunction given in brackets.

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A

- 0 Cliff Richard's Christmas single went straight to the top of the charts.c.....
- 1 Many people believe that capital punishment is a deterrent to serious crime.
- 2 We usually consider it healthy to eat lots of fruit.
- 3 I enjoy having people to stay.
- 4 The main medium of communication on the Internet is English.
- 5 Iain Banks's early novels were considered quite strange.
- 6 I tend to drink more white wine.
- 7 Global warming is often considered the main factor in current climate fluctuations.

B

- a Many web sites now operate in other languages. (although)
- b Too much can produce an excess of acid in the stomach. (but)
- c ~~He is reviled by much of the pop music establishment.~~ (even though)
- d Climate change has long been a feature of the Earth's development. (yet)
- e It actually makes little difference to the crime rate. (on the contrary)
- f My husband prefers red. (whereas)
- g I always appreciate the peace when they have gone. (though)
- h His later books are more mainstream and accessible. (while)
- 0 ... *Cliff Richard's Christmas single went straight to the top of the charts, even though he is reviled by much of the pop music establishment*.....

Q 2.

For each of the sentences below, write a new sentence as similar as possible in meaning to the original sentence, but using the word given.

- 0 Malcolm's teeth were bothering him again, even though he had recently visited the dentist.

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despite *Malcolm's teeth were bothering him again, despite the fact that he had recently visited the dentist.....*

1. Very little of the remaining stock sold, despite the low prices in the sale.

even though

2. The ailing magazine tried introducing several new features. Nevertheless, circulation continued to drop.

although

3. Although this may seem difficult now, you'll soon wonder why it caused so many problems.

though

4. In spite of her insistence that all was well, I knew that something was wrong.

fact

5. The Scots won the battle, even though they had a far smaller force.

despite

6. Despite the fact that the critics hated it, Archer's latest book was well received by the public.

being

Q 3.

Six of these sentences contain a mistake in word order or formality. Tick (✓) the two correct sentences and correct the mistakes in the others.

1. I think that I did quite well in the computing exam. It was more difficult than though I expected.
2. We were expecting a basic but pleasant apartment. On the contrary, what we got was little more than a hovel.
3. Strictly no pets are allowed in the hotel rooms. Guide dogs for the blind may be permitted with prior permission from the management, mind you.
4. Julian's just had a shocking cold. It didn't last long, still.

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5. Office supplies may be ordered as necessary. However, all orders must be copied to the Accounts Department.
6. I know you'd like us to be godparents to little Emily. We'd rather all the same not.
7. That new kid at the nursery is a right little pain. He really gets on your nerves. Nevertheless, we've got to do our best by him.
8. Writing more than the required number of words will not attract a higher mark. You may be penalised for failing to follow on the other hand the rules.

Q 4.

Which of the sentences in these pairs have different meanings? Put a tick (✓) in the correct box. The exercise begins with an example (0).

0

A In spite of the fact that this computer costs less, it's as good as the other one.

B Despite its lower price, this computer is as good as the other one.

same ✓ different □

1

A Despite the awful weather, the parade was a success.

B Although the weather was awful, the parade was a success,

same □ different □

2

A Brilliant as he is, he can't find a suitable job.

B Though he is brilliant, he can't find a suitable job.

same □ different □

3

A Even though I went to the party, I didn't see her.

B Even if I went to the party, I wouldn't see her.

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same different

4

A The new museum is extremely popular. It hasn't made any money yet.

B The new museum is extremely popular, yet it hasn't made any money.

same different

5

A This ice cream is very sweet and rich, though it's not very fattening.

B This ice cream is very sweet and rich. It's not very fattening, though.

same different

6

A The waiters in this restaurant are notoriously rude. However, customers keep coming back.

B The waiters in this restaurant are notoriously rude. Even so, customers keep coming back.

same different

7

A Even as we complained, the noise continued.

B Even though we complained, the noise continued.

same different

8

A We were at the Norfolk Hotel, while the rest of the group was at the Grange.

B While we were staying at the Norfolk Hotel the rest of the group moved to the Grange.

same different

9

A Though delighted at her sister's success, Vicky couldn't help feeling somewhat envious.

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B Despite her delight at her sister's success, Vicky couldn't help feeling somewhat envious.

same different

10

A Men usually have good spatial awareness, whereas women's linguistic skills are often better.

B Whereas men usually have good spatial awareness, women's linguistic skills are often better.

same different

11

A 'Mary threatened to leave last night. She's still here now.'

B 'Mary threatened to leave last night. Still, she's here now.'

same different

12

A Chicken pox is much milder in children than in adults. It's still not pleasant, mind you.

B Chicken pox is much milder in children than in adults. All the same, it's still not pleasant.

same different

Q 5.

Complete each gap in the text with a conjunction or preposition from the box.

Although	but	despite	Despite	even
though	however	However	Nevertheless	On the
contrary	though	whereas	While	Yet

The Elgin Marbles are statues which date back to the 5th century BC. (0)...Although....they were created in Greece and were located there until the late 18th century, they are now exhibited in the British Museum, London.

The statues used to be in Athens (1).....they were bought in 1799 by the Englishman Lord Elgin, who wanted to bring them back to Britain as part of his personal art collection.

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(2).....on the sea voyage back to England, the ship carrying them was sunk and the ‘Marbles’ were temporarily lost. It would be an incredibly expensive operation to recover them.

(3)..... Elgin did so, and (4)..... he was a very rich man, he placed himself in enormous debt. (5) his own desires, he had to sell the Marbles to the British Government to recover his losses and they were housed in the British Museum, where they have remained ever since.

In recent times, (6)....., the statues have become the subject of debate between Britain and Greece and, indeed, among British historians and archaeologists. (7)..... the Greek authorities have requested the return of the Marbles on many occasions, the request has always been refused. There are arguments on both sides. Some people believe that it would be foolish to return them, valid (8)..... the Greek request may be, because of the pollution that is affecting the Parthenon and the possibility of earthquakes in Greece. Restored to the Parthenon, the Marbles could be exposed to damage, (9)..... they are safe in the British Museum.

Of course, there are equally compelling arguments for their return, especially on the moral level. It cannot be denied, (10)..... the material safety the statues enjoy in Britain, that they are part of the Greek heritage. Many people also refute the argument that Athens would not be a safe place for them. (11)..... , they claim that if the statues were returned to Greece, a new state-of-the-art building would be constructed to house them, where they would be both safe and in their rightful environment. Furthermore, the British authorities have long used the argument that works of art should not be subject to ‘ownership’, but should be kept where they are accessible to most people. (12)..... in the past they have returned a number of cultural artefacts from other civilisations to their origins.

The argument continues, and is likely to do so for some time in the future.

D ANSWER KEY FOR DIAGNOSTIC TEST

1. ~~even though~~ => but
2. ✓
3. ~~But they'd travelled round the world, they had~~ => They'd travelled round the world but they had/ Although they'd travelled around the world, they had
4. ✓
5. ~~she had served although~~ => although she had served
6. ~~Even although~~ => Even though

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7. ~~even they have had~~ => even though they have had
8. ~~They are a haven of peace and tranquillity~~ => Yet, they are a haven of peace and tranquillity
9. ✓
10. ~~Ideal the house may appear~~ => Ideal though the house may appear
11. ~~In spite of he had~~ => In spite of the fact that he had/ In spite of having/Although he had
12. ~~Despite she was a women~~ => Despite the fact that she was a woman/Despite being a woman/Although she was a woman
13. ✓
14. ~~Although the fact that the machine~~ => Although the machine/ Despite/ In spite of the fact that the machine
15. ~~Nonetheless~~ => Mind you/Still/ All the same
16. ~~However a dog may be a good companion for the elderly, the need to take it for walks~~ => A dog may be a good companion for the elderly. However, the need to take it for walks
17. ~~Australian, by contrast, champagne~~ => Australian champagne, by contrast/ By contrast, Australian champagne
18. ✓
19. ~~They will certainly be popular as they are realistically priced, still~~ => Still, they will certainly be popular as they are realistically priced.
20. ✓

E ANSWER KEY FOR PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

1 e Many people believe that capital punishment is a deterrent to serious crime. On the contrary, it actually makes little difference to the crime rate.

2 b We usually consider it healthy to eat lots of fruit but too much can produce an excess of acid in the stomach.

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3 g I enjoy having people to stay, though I always appreciate the peace when they have gone./ I always appreciate the peace when they have gone, though.

4 a The main medium of communication on the Internet is English, although many web sites now operate in other languages.

5 h Iain Banks's early novels were considered quite strange, while his later books are more mainstream and accessible.

6 f I tend to drink more white wine, whereas my husband prefers red.

7 d Global warming is often considered the main factor in current climate fluctuations. Yet climate change has long been a feature of the Earth's development.

Q 2.

1 Very little of the remaining stock sold, even though the prices in the sale were very low.

2 Although the ailing magazine tried introducing several new features, circulation continued to drop.

3 Difficult though this may seem now, you'll soon wonder why it caused so many problems.

4 In spite of the fact that she insisted (that) all was well, I knew that something was wrong.

5 The Scots won the battle, despite their smaller force./despite having a far smaller force.

6 Despite being hated by the critics, Archer's latest book was well received by the public.

Q 3.

1 ~~than though I expected~~ => than I expected, though

2 ✓

3 ~~mind you~~ => however/on the other hand

4 ~~It didn't last long, still~~ => Still, it didn't last long.

5 ✓

6 ~~We'd rather all the same not.~~ => We'd rather not. all the same./ All the same, we'd rather not.

7 ~~Nevertheless~~ => Still/ All the same/Mind you

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8 ~~You may be penalised for failing to follow on the other hand the rules.~~ => On the other hand, you may .../You may, on the other hand be penalised, on the other hand, for.../... for failing to follow the rules, on the other hand.

Q 4.

1 same 2 same 3 different

4 different 5 same 6 same

7 different 8 different 9 same

10 same 11 different 12 same

Q 5.

1 but	7 While
2 However	8 though
3 Nevertheless	9 whereas
4 even though	10 despite
5 Despite	11 On the contrary
6 however	12 Yet

Advanced Grammar for IELTS: Passive Structures

The person who performs an action in a passive sentence is called the agent, introduced by *by*. The agent may or may not be mentioned.

*My purse was found by **one of the cleaners**.*

A new road has been built.

An object which causes something to happen is called an instrument, introduced by *with*.

*He was hit on the head with **a hammer**.*

Verbs with two objects

Verbs which have two objects can be made passive in two ways.

*I was handed **a note**. **A note** was handed **to me**.*

Other common verbs of this type are:

bring, give, lend, pass, pay, promise, sell, send, show, tell

Verbs with object and complement

Some verbs have a noun or adjective which describes their object.

*We elected Jim **class representative**.*

*Everyone considered him **a failure**.*

When these are made passive, the complement goes directly after the verb.

*Jim was elected **class representative**.*

*He was considered **a failure**.*

Verbs which can't be passive

Most verbs with an object (transitive verbs) can be made passive:

e.g. *drive* is transitive because one can drive **something** (a car).

However, a few transitive verbs may not be used in the passive. These include: *become, fit* (be the right size), *get, have, lack, let, like, resemble, suit*.

Verbs with no object (intransitive) can not be passive:

e.g. *fall* is intransitive, you cannot 'fall something'.

Therefore it is not possible to say 'The tree was fallen'. Instead the sentence must be active: *The tree fell*.

Change of focus

The passive can change the emphasis of a sentence.

Jack won the prize, (focus on Jack)

The prize was won by Jack, (focus on the prize)

Unknown agent

The agent is not mentioned if unknown.

*My wallet **has been taken***.

In this case, there is no point in adding an agent: 'by somebody'.

Generalised agent

If the subject is 'people in general' or 'you' the agent is not mentioned.

*Bicycles are widely **used** in the city instead of public transport*.

Obvious agent

If the agent is obvious or has already been referred to, it is not mentioned.

*Linda **has been arrested!*** (we assume by the police)

*The company agreed to our request and a new car park **was opened***.

Unimportant agent

If the agent is not important to the meaning of the sentence it is not mentioned.

*I **was advised** to obtain a visa in advance*.

Impersonality

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Using the passive is a way of avoiding the naming of a specific person who is responsible for an action.

*It **has been decided** to reduce all salaries by 10%.*

In descriptions of processes, there is emphasis on the actions performed rather than on the people who perform them.

*Then the packets **are packed** into boxes of twenty-four.*

Practice:

Correct any verb forms which are impossible or inappropriate.

- a) A lot of homes in the area have been being broken into by burglars.
- b) As I drove south, I could see that the old road was rebuilding.
- c) I suppose the letter will have been delivered by now
- d) There is nothing more annoying than been interrupted when you are speaking
- e) Jim was been given the sack from his new job
- f) Somehow without my noticing my wallet had been disappeared.
- g) The new shopping centre was opened by the local MR
- h) A lot of meetings have been held, but nothing has being decided yet.

Rewrite each sentence in the passive, omitting the words underlined.

- a) Someone left the phone off the hook all night.
- b) The government has announced that petrol prices will rise tomorrow.
- c) A burglar broke into our house last week.
- d) People asked me the way three times.
- e) The fruit-pickers pick the apples early in the morning.
- f) It's time the authorities did something about this problem.
- g) Lots of people had parked their cars on the pavement.

- h) The government agreed with the report and so they changed the law.
- i) You have to fill in an application form.

**Advanced Grammar for IELTS: Relative clauses – Diagnose Test,
Grammar Explanation & Practice Exercises**

A DIAGNOSTIC TEST: Relative clauses

Underline the correct alternative in **bold**.

Do you know anyone **which/ who** can repair cigarette burns on clothes?

1. It's usually children from deprived backgrounds **that/ which** cause the worst problems.
2. Captain Corelli's Mandolin, **that/ which** topped the best-seller lists for weeks on end, was never formally publicised.
3. The Council provides bins in **that/ which** waste paper can be deposited for recycling.
4. All cows over 30 months **who/ which** may have been exposed to BSE will be destroyed.
5. Address the reference 'to **who/whom** it may concern', as it's very formal.
6. The town hall clock played a different tune at twelve every day, **which/ what** amused the locals and attracted tourists.
7. 'There's a lucky person in this hall **who/ whose** lottery ticket has just won them £2,000!'
8. 'Why don't you tell the police **which/ what** you told me yesterday?'
9. The film is set in the period **where/ when** the divide between rich and poor was much greater than it is now.
10. You can put the photo **whichever/ wherever** you think it looks best.

Each sentence below contains a mistake. Find the mistakes and correct them.

Example

Orders for ~~that~~ we have received payment will be processed immediately.**which**.....

11. The jackets which this shop makes them are of excellent quality
12. Jack has prepared his favourite dish from Delia Smith's recipe book, which he is about to eat.
13. Can you get me one of those chocolate bars have got toffee in the middle?

14. The charity event raised over £1,000 for St Andrew's Hospice which opened last year.
15. I'd always wanted to take Graham to the city where I grew up in.
16. Have you invited the residents who living here on a temporary basis to the meeting?
17. He presented the visiting ambassador with a genuine Ming vase, that was worth over \$10,000
18. The bank robbery what I told you about is in the local newspaper.
19. High taxation is often the main reason which governments fall.
20. The new buyer identified a dozen new sources for the material, most of them proved to be reliable.

B GRAMMAR EXPLANATION: Relative clauses

Relative clauses are subordinate clauses which refer to the noun of the main clause, identifying it or adding extra information. There are two types of relative clause: defining clauses (identifying the noun or classifying it as part of a group) and non-defining clauses (adding information about the noun). This unit examines both types of relative clause and the pronouns and adverbs used to introduce relative clauses.

1. RELATIVE CLAUSES

1A. Form and use

Relative clauses are subordinate clauses introduced by relative pronouns, such as *that*, *which* or *who*. These clauses give information about someone or something in the main clause. Compare these examples:

I used to live in one of **those houses**. They have now been demolished.

I used to live in one of **those houses** that have now been demolished.

main clause

relative clause

The relative pronoun is the subject or object of the relative clause. It is therefore unnecessary to repeat the noun from the main clause or introduce a personal pronoun to replace it:

X ~~I used to live in one of those houses that they have now been demolished.~~

We usually put the relative clause as close as possible to the noun it refers to, otherwise the meaning may not be clear:

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X *Jack has prepared his favourite dish from Jamie Smith's recipe book, which he is about to eat*

✓ *Jack has prepared his favourite dish, which he is about to eat, from Jamie Smith's recipe book.*

We often avoid relative clauses in casual speech and writing, preferring shorter ways of defining or adding information:

People who come from Wales are often quite musical. (relative clause)

Welsh people are often quite musical. (adjective)

People from Wales are often quite musical. (prepositional phrase)

1B. Subjects and objects

A relative pronoun can be the subject of a relative clause:

*Last week I saw that film **which** won all the Oscars.*

subject relative pronoun

Here, the pronoun is the subject of the relative clause (*the film won the Oscars*), even though it is the object of the main clause (*I saw the film*).

A relative pronoun can also be the object of a relative clause:

*Last week I saw the film **which** you made at college.*

object relative pronoun

Here, the pronoun is the object of the subordinate clause (*you made the film*).

In defining relative clauses, we can omit the relative pronoun when it is the object of the relative clause, but not when it is the subject:

X *Last week I saw the film won all the Oscars.*

✓ *Last week I saw the film you made at college.*

1C. Defining relative clauses

A defining relative clause identifies or classifies a noun or pronoun in the main clause:

- *Identifying relative clause: Is this the book **that you were looking for**?*

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- *Classifying relative clause: Would all those **who have booked dinner please go to the restaurant now?***

(In the second example, the relative clause classifies the members of a group.)

In defining relatives, the relative clause gives information which is necessary for the sense of the sentence. In the first example above, if we say just *Is this the book?*, this does not convey the key meaning of the whole sentence, i.e. the book that you were looking for.

We often use defining relative clauses to describe an important quality of someone or something:

*Van Gogh was an artist **who used a lot of bold, vibrant colours.***

We often use a relative clause with the same pattern for emphasis, with introductory *It*:

It is always violent crime that provokes the most extreme reaction from the public.

1D. Non-defining relative clauses

We usually use non-defining relative clauses to add extra information about the subject of a main clause:

*ITV's News at Ten, **which occupied the mid-evening slot for many years,** was a very popular programme.*

(main clause = ITV's News at Ten was a very popular programme.)

We can also use non-defining relative clauses to show consecutive actions:

*Heskey passed the ball to Owen, **who scored a magnificent goal***

We use non-defining relative clauses mainly in writing and formal speech.

1E. Punctuation and pausing

We usually use commas to separate the relative clause from the main clause in non-defining relatives, but we do not use them in defining relatives:

*The tribespeople, **who traded with the settlers,** retained their land.* (All of the tribespeople retained their land, and, incidentally, they traded with the settlers.)

*The tribespeople **who traded with the settlers** retained their land.* (Only some of the tribespeople retained their land – this defines a group.)

The use of commas reflects the way we say the two types of relative clause.

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In defining relative clauses, there is no pause between the main clause and the relative clause:

We asked for the double room which had a sea view.

In non-defining relatives, there is a short pause after the main clause or between the two parts of the main clause:

We were given a lovely double room (), which had a sea view.

I first met Harry Gardiner (). who eventually became my father-in-law (), at a Law Society meeting.

1F. Prepositions with relative clauses

We can use prepositions with relative pronouns. Where we put the preposition depends on formality:

- Informal: *Have you seen the little case **that/ which** I keep my contact lenses in?*
- Formal: *This system provides a case in **which** the contact lenses can be kept.*

Note: We do not put a preposition before the relative pronoun that:

X This system provides a case in that the contact lenses can be kept.

Note: If we put a preposition before who, the pronoun always becomes whom. Compare:

*The people **who** this report is addressed to will have to consider carefully the consequences of the proposed cuts.*

*The people **to whom** this report is addressed will have to consider carefully the consequences of the proposed cuts.*

We can often use *where* (for places) or *when* (for times) instead of *which* + preposition:

This is the house where I grew up/ which I grew up in/ in which I grew up.

1G. Reduced relative clauses

We often 'reduce' a relative clause, i.e. we shorten it by omitting the pronoun and verb. We can do this with a participle phrase:

Marilyn was the woman living in the flat underneath us at the time (= ... who lived/was living in ...)

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The clauses struck out of the agreement were all unimportant. (= ... which were struck out/which we struck out ...)

Another possibility is to use an infinitive phrase:

Newton was the first person to really understand the laws of gravity. (= ... who really understood ...)

2. RELATIVE PRONOUNS AND ADVERBS

2A. General use

This table lists relative pronouns and adverbs and how they can be used:

	Use for	Use as			
		Subject	Object	Defining	Non-defining
Pronounce					
1 who	People, animal	✓	✓	✓	✓
whom	People	x	✓	✓	✓
2 which	Objects, animal	✓	✓	✓	✓
Which	ideas	✓	✓	x	✓
3 that	People, object, animal	✓	✓	✓	X
4 whose	Relationships, possessions	✓	✓	✓	✓
5 no pronoun	People, things, animals	x	✓	✓	X
Adverbs					
6 where	Places	✓	✓	✓	✓
7 when	Times	✓	✓	✓	✓

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8 why	Reasons	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nominal pronoun					
9 what	Objects, ideas (mean the thing that)	✓	✓	✓	X

Notes on the table:

1: We sometimes use *who* to refer to animals, particularly domestic pets:

Is Sheba the dog who was run over and nearly killed last year?

Whom is formal and we rarely use it in speech. We now mainly use it after prepositions:

I am referring to the person with whom you were seen on that evening.

2: Note that we always use *which* (not *who*) to refer to inanimate objects.

We can also use *which* to refer to the ‘idea’ of a whole clause:

When he came home, he was unusually attentive, which made her very suspicious.

Here, *which* refers to the fact that ‘he was unusually attentive’.

3: We can use *that* to refer to people or objects, but we usually prefer to use *who* for a person when the pronoun is the subject of the relative clause:

Ms Harrison is the lawyer who/that has been chosen to represent you.

Note: We do not use *that* in non-defining relative clauses:

~~*X This offer, that will not be repeated, must end next week.*~~

Note: In US English *that* is more common than *which* or *who* in defining relative clauses.

4: It is possible, though not very common, to use *whose* to refer to objects.

It would only be possible to colonise planets whose atmosphere contained enough oxygen to sustain human life. (= the atmosphere of which)

5: We often omit a relative pronoun when it refers to the object of a defining relative clause:

The girl (who) I met in the florist’s was at the party. (= I met the girl.)

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We cannot omit the pronoun if it is the subject of the clause:

X ~~The girl works for the florist in the High Street was at the party.~~

✓ *The girl who works for the florist in the High Street was at the party.*

Note: We cannot omit an object relative pronoun in non-defining relative clauses:

X ~~Last year's winner presented the cup, each holder keeps for the year.~~

✓ *Last year's winner presented the cup, which each holder keeps for the year.*

6: We can use which or that + a preposition instead of where:

Mozart's birthplace and the house where he composed 'The Magic Flute' are both now museums.

Mozart's birthplace and the house that he composed 'The Magic Flute' in are both now museums.

7: We can use that as an alternative to when in defining relative clauses:

I remember – it was the day when/ that the heatwave started.

We can use which or that + a preposition instead of when:

The attacks continued up to the day on which the agreement was signed.

8: The only noun which takes why as a relative pronoun is reason:

Sometimes he thought her clear morality was the reason why/ that he loved her.

We can use which + for instead of why.

High taxation is often the main reason for which governments fall.

Note: It is possible to use relative adverbs without the noun to which they refer:

It's (the place) where that rock festival is held every year.

9: We use what to mean 'the thing that/ which'. The clause containing 'what' is a nominal clause, i.e. the whole clause acts as a noun, either a subject or an object. While 'what' isn't used in the same way as 'that' or 'which' it can fulfil the same functions as the other relative pronouns:

Why don't you tell the police what you told me yesterday?

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In this example *what you told me yesterday* is the object of the verb *tell*. It means the same as:

Why don't you tell the police the story (that) you told me yesterday.

We cannot use *what* to replace *who*, *which* or *that*:

X ~~*It was the money what I wanted, not the fame.*~~

✓ *It was the money (that) I wanted, not the fame.*

This could be expressed as:

The money was what I wanted, not the fame. (= the thing that I wanted)

2B. Modifying a relative pronoun/ adverb

We often use modifiers, such as all of and many of before which or whom in a non-defining relative clause to refer to the subject or object of the clause:

The supermarket removed from the shelves all of its jars of tomato puree, several of which were found to contain fragments of glass.

The college entered over a hundred students for the exam, all of whom passed.

We interviewed fourteen applicants for the post, none of whom we thought suitable.

2C. Whichever, whenever, etc.

In defining relative clauses we can modify the pronoun or adverb with *-ever* to give the meaning of *anything, anyone, anywhere*, etc.:

Use whichever phone you want – they all have outside lines.

I'd like to meet whoever did that to the garden hedge!

You can put the photo wherever you think it looks best. I don't mind.

C PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

Match each headline (1-10) with a sentence (A-J). Then write one sentence containing a relative clause (defining or non-defining) to combine each headline and sentence that accompanies it. Use the present perfect tense in the main clause.

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<p>0 SCIENTISTS DISCOVER NEW WONDER-CURE FOR CANCER</p> <p>1. BODY OF MAN FOUND IN RIVER SEVERN</p> <p>2. FASHION ICON QUANT LEAVES BUSINESS</p> <p>3. GLOBAL WARMING CONFERENCE ENDS WITHOUT AGREEMENT</p> <p>4. IRVINE NARROWLY MISSES FORMULA 1 WORLD CHAMPION TITLE</p> <p>5. HAND COUNT OF VOTES CONTINUES</p> <p>6. LONDON ZOO REMAINS OPEN</p> <p>7. POLITICIAN HANDS IN RESIGNATION</p> <p>8. SIZE 16 MODEL WINS NEW ESTEE LAUDER CONTRACT</p> <p>9. MADONNA'S UK HOME BURGLED</p>	<p>A He was disgraced in a financial scandal.</p> <p>B They were spoiled in the recent US presidential election.</p> <p>C His contract with Ferrari finishes at the end of the season.</p> <p>D It was held in The Hague.</p> <p>E She shares the house with her British husband, Guy Ritchie.</p> <p>F It was in danger of closing through lack of funds.</p> <p>C She refused to diet to a size 12.</p> <p>H The man jumped off the Severn Bridge.</p> <p>I They have been studying cancer genes for years.</p> <p>J She is famous for inventing the mini-skirt.</p>
--	---

0 Scientists*(I who have been studying cancer genes for years have just discovered a new wonder – cure for cancer.*

1 The body of a man.....

2 The fashion icon Mary Quant

3 The global warming conference

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4 Formula 1 driver Eddie

Irvine.....

5 The hand count of votes

.....

6 London Zoo

.....

7 The politician

.....

8 The size 16 model

.....

9 Madonna's house in the UK

.....

Q 2.

Complete the following article by writing each missing relative pronoun or adverb in the space provided. Use only one word for each space.

Jack of Hearts

Jack of Hearts is a new six-part drama series (0) ..which/ that ...comes to our screens this week. It has been given the prime Wednesday evening 9.30 slot, (1).... shows that the network has faith in its latest creation. The first episode opens to a scene (2)..... a young man is being chased. He stops at a phone box and makes a desperate call. This calls wakes up a man (3)..... most viewers will recognise as Keith Allen – the slightly sleazy unshaven Cockney (4)..... characters are usually less than wholesome. This time, however, he is on the right side of the law, playing a probation officer with a complicated professional and personal life, both of (5)..... form the main themes of the series. The writers have managed to find a different angle on his personal problems. At the centre of these problems is his stepdaughter, for (6)..... he attempts to keep the household together. His relationship with the girl's mother, (7)..... seems to be a bad-tempered, grumpy woman, is further compromised later in the series (8)..... she joins the staff of a college at (9)..... she meets a former lover. Thus the ground is prepared in this first episode for a series (10)..... may help to lift British summertime TV out of its regular slump.

Q 3.

This article has too many relative clauses in it. Change the underlined parts so that you don't use a relative clause. The first one has been done for you.

Controversial school to close

Brockenhurst School, which opened as an educational experiment in 1974, is to close this summer. All the teachers (0) who are currently employed by the school will be relocated to other schools in the area (1) which have staff vacancies.

Brockenhurst was founded by (2) Sir Patrick McDonald, who comes from Inverness, at a time when new educational theories were welcomed by the establishment and experiments in education were supported. However, in recent years, such initiatives have been frowned upon as successive governments have urged a 'back-to-basics' approach.

The school currently employs 28 teachers, (3) all of whom come from the holistic school of education. Most of the teachers have been at the school for at least 15 years. There are approximately 780 students (4) who are of different ages at the school, and they will all transfer to schools in the region. Staff (5) who are currently living at the school will be found alternative housing by the local council.

Sir Patrick was the first person (6) who was informed of the government's decision and he passed the bad news on to staff and students at a meeting (7) which was held last week. Sir Patrick, who is 62, has decided to take early retirement. Although Sir Patrick himself was unavailable for comment, a spokesperson for the school told us. 'We are all very sorry about the closure. For over 25 years we have run an establishment (8) which has been dedicated to making learning a rich and enjoyable experience. All the staff and students (9) who have been participating over the years will agree that this is a sad day not only for the local community but for education in this country as a whole.'

Example:

(0) who are currently employed by the school => currently employed by the school

Q 4.

Complete the article at the top of the page opposite with an appropriate relative pronoun or adverb (if necessary) and a phrase from the box. Use each phrase once only. Write the letter of each phrase (A-I) in the spaces (1-8).

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Pronouns	Phrases	
who	A	raise huge amounts of money
whose	B	only the privileged can take part
whom	C	most of us can only dream about
where	D	activities are as diverse as
which	E	she was able to raise so much
why	F	women hire private jets to go shopping
that	G	has given nearly \$200 million
	H	you often can't find a cab
	I	they wear only once

Women who rule New York

There is another world in New York beyond the tourist attractions and the high-rise blocks (0)...which C..... It's a world (1)..... and pay several thousand dollars for a dress (2)..... These are women for whom one of the modern-day necessities is having a personal car and driver in New York, (3)These women, however, are not only interested in designer clothes and facelifts, but they are also serious philanthropists, many of (4)..... for charity. Brooke Astor, for example, is a 97-year-old socialite (5)..... to charitable causes in the last 40 years. This 'Queen of New York Society', (6)..... visiting elementary schools and attending charity dinners, has raised \$4 million in one evening alone. In an explanation of (7)....., she admits that she tries to stimulate competition amongst her wealthy and famous guests. This is a ratified life in (8)....., but which does a lot of good for the less fortunate.

Q 5.

Read the following text. In most lines, there is an unnecessary word, a word missing or a punctuation error. For each numbered line 1-22, identify the mistake and write the correct version in the space on the right. Some lines are correct. Indicate these lines with a tick (✓). The first two lines are examples (0 and 00).

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0 Tourism today is an industry **V** has grown so much in recent years that in many *which*
00 countries it provides the greatest single contribution to the country's revenue ✓
1 But is it always a good thing? Mass tourism which is a relatively recent
2 phenomenon, brings with it a whole raft of problems. First, it means that a
3 country's economy may rely on an industry which it is wholly seasonal, with
4 the consequence that the huge numbers of people work in tourism during the
5 season have no income during the rest of the year. Some find wherever work
6 they can, but others may turn to a government is already receiving lower
7 revenues for support.
8 Second, it is true that in many countries tourists are destroying the very
9 sights they flock to see them. They take home pieces of an ancient monument
10 or of a coral reef which will gradually result in erosion of the attractions and
11 therefore of the industry. While this kind of destruction may be wholly
12 unintentional, a certain type of tourist what wants only a 'good time' can be
13 very destructive in a different way: they drink too much, pick fights and
14 destroy the clubs and bars where they are drinking in. Obviously, it is then
15 this behaviour by that the local community judges all members of that
16 nationality group, creating enmity between races rather than fostering
17 empathy, what should be one of the main advantages of tourism.
18 Finally, there are many places tourism is threatening a well-established
19 way of life: people that whose livelihoods traditionally come from older
20 industries, such as agriculture or fishing, are finding new jobs and wealth in
21 the over-developed tourist regions, but at what cost? It is sometimes difficult

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22 to understand exactly which a country gains from tourism.

D ANSWER KEY FOR DIAGNOSTIC TEST

1 that

2 which

3 which

4 which

5 whom

6 which

7 whose

8 what

9 when

10 wherever

11 ~~which this shop makes them~~ => which this shop makes

12 ~~Jack has prepared his favourite dish from Delia Smith's recipe book, which he is about to eat~~ => Jack has prepared his favourite dish, which he is about to eat, from Delia Smith's recipe book.

13 ~~bars have got toffee in the middle?~~ => bars which/ that have got toffee in the middle?/
bars with toffee in the middle?

14 ~~St Andrew's Hospice which opened last year.~~ => St Andrew's Hospice, which opened last year.

15 ~~the city where I grew up in.~~ => the city where I grew up./the city which/that I grew up in.

16 ~~the residents who living here~~ => the residents who are living here/the residents living here

17 ~~a genuine Ming vase, that was worth~~ => a genuine Ming vase, which was worth

18 ~~The bank robbery what told you about~~ => The bank robbery that/which I told you about

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19 ~~the main reason which governments fall~~ => the main reason why governments fall.

20 ~~most of them proved~~ => most of which proved

E ANSWER KEY FOR PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

1 H The body of a man who jumped off the Severn Bridge has been found in the River Severn.

2 J The fashion icon Mary Quant, who is famous for inventing the mini-skirt, has left her business.

3 D The global warming conference, which was held in The Hague, has ended without agreement.

4 C Formula 1 driver Eddie Irvine, whose contract with Ferrari finishes at the end of the season, has narrowly missed gaining the Formula 1 World Champion title (today).

5 B The hand count of votes which/that were spoiled in the recent US presidential election has continued.

6 F London Zoo, which was in danger of closing through lack of funds, has remained open.

7 A The politician who was disgraced in a financial scandal has handed in his resignation.

8 G The size 16 model who refused to diet to a size 12 has won the new Estee Lauder contract.

9 E Madonna s house in the UK, which she shares with her British partner, Guy Ritchie, has been burgled.

Q 2.

1 which 2 where 3 who/ whom/that

4 whose 5 which 6 whom

7 who 8 when 9 which 10 which/that

Q 3.

1 with staff vacancies

2 Sir Patrick McDonald, from Inverness

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- 3 all from the holistic school of education.
- 4 of different ages
- 5 currently living
- 6 to be informed of the government's decision
- 7 (held) last week
- 8 dedicated to
- 9 participating over the years

Q 4.

- 1 where F
- 2 (that/which) I
- 3 where H
- 4 whom A
- 5 who C
- 6 whose D
- 7 why E
- 8 which B

Q 5.

- 1 ~~tourism which~~ => tourism, which
- 2 ✓
- 3 ~~which it is~~ => which is wholly seasonal
- 4 ~~people work~~ => people who work
- 5 ~~wherever work~~ => work wherever
- 6 ~~government is already receiving~~ => government which/that is already receiving/government

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already receiving

7 ✓

8 ✓

9 ~~to see them.~~ => to see.

10 ~~reef which~~ => reef, which

11 ✓

12 ~~tourist what wants~~ => tourist who/that wants

13 ✓

14 ~~where they are drinking in.~~ => where they are drinking./that/which they are drinking in.

15 ~~that~~ => which

16 ✓

17 ~~what~~ => which

18 ~~places tourism~~ => places where/ in which tourism

19 ~~that whose~~ => whose

20 ✓

21 ✓

22 ~~which~~ => what

**Advanced Grammar for IELTS: Emphatic structures and inversion
– Diagnose Test, Grammar Explanation & Practice Exercises**

A DIAGNOSTIC TEST: Emphatic structures and inversion

Make the sentences more emphatic by rewriting them, beginning with the word(s) in brackets.

Example

They are doing something quite unprecedented. (**What**)

=> *What they are doing is quite unprecedented*

1. The shellfish made Jasmine sick. (**It was**)
2. Greg lost the office keys. (**It**)
3. He's approaching the problem from an entirely new angle. (**What**)
4. They've done something unforgivable. (**What**)
5. I came by bus because my car has broken down. (**The reason**)
6. A second chance is the only thing I want. (**All**)
7. The guy who told me about the new club was Zack. (**Zack**)
8. We have to leave our bags and coats here. (**This**)
9. They told me the same thing. (**That's**)
10. He's very unlucky in love! (**Lucky**)
11. The interactive displays were much more interesting. (**Much**)
12. The Lord Chancellor was also at the ceremony (**Also**)
13. The firefighters were unable to enter the building because the heat was so intense. (**So**)
14. A parking ticket was stuck to my windscreen. (**Stuck**)
15. Although they were defeated they managed to keep smiling. (**Defeated**)
16. A gnarled old oak tree stands beside the river bank. (**Beside**)

17. The midnight movie is after this. (**Next**)
18. The government has hardly ever suffered such an overwhelming defeat. (**Seldom**)
19. As soon as we arrived they announced that the show was cancelled. (**No sooner**)
20. Refunds cannot be given under any circumstances. (**Under**)

B GRAMMAR EXPLANATION: Emphatic structures and inversion

We often emphasise a particular part of a sentence, perhaps to contradict what someone else has said or for dramatic effect. In speech we can do this with stress and intonation alone, but we can also do this by changing the position of elements in a sentence in speech and in writing. In this unit we look at the ways we can manipulate grammar to emphasise something, by splitting one sentence into two parts (cleft sentences) or by bringing the element we want to emphasise to the beginning (fronting).

1. CLEFT SENTENCES

1A. Form and use

‘Cleft’ means divided. In a cleft sentence, information which could be given in one clause is divided into two parts, each with its own verb:

Vanessa has made the greatest impact. (normal sentence: single clause, one verb)

It is Vanessa who has made the greatest impact. (cleft sentence: two clauses, two verbs)

This gives extra emphasis to part of the sentence. We often use this pattern to emphasise some piece of new information, to give explanations or to make a contrast with a previous statement (the emphasised information is in **bold**):

*All of the Redgrave family are gifted actors. But it is **Vanessa** who made the greatest impact in the world of feature films.*

*‘I remember your uncle taking us to the fair.’ ‘No, it was **my father** that took us there.’*

1B. it cleft sentences

It cleft sentences have this structure:

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it + a form of be (+ not and/or adverb) + **emphasised word/phrase** + that /which/ who clause

It isn't just his outlandish sense of humour that I'm complaining about

We can use this pattern to emphasise the subject or the object of a simple sentence, or an adverbial phrase, or a prepositional phrase:

sentence Mike took Sally to the party on Saturday.

emphasising the subject *It was Mike who took Sally to the party on Saturday.*

emphasising the object *It was Sally (that) Mike took to the party on Saturday.*

emphasising the adverbial *It was on Saturday (that) Mike took Sally to the party*

emphasising the prepositional phrase *It was to the party (that) Mike took Sally on Saturday.*

In informal English we can use *when* and *where* clauses, but we do not use *how* or *why*:

It was in January when I got the test results.

It's in Green Street market where we'll find the best bargains.

X It was greed why he did it. ✓ *It was because of greed that he did it*

X It is using a calculator how he does it. ✓ *It is by using a calculator that he does it*

Note: We cannot use *it* clefts to highlight the action or a verb complement in a sentence. We use *wh-* clefts to do this:

X It was taking Sally to the party that Mike did. ✓ *What Mike did was take Sally*

X It is totally unscrupulous that they are. ✓ *What they are is unscrupulous*

1C. Wh- cleft sentences

We can use this pattern to highlight the action in a sentence. For example, if we want to highlight Mike's action of taking Sally to the party:

wh- clause + a form of be + **emphasised word or phrase**

What Mike did was take Sally to the party

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In these sentences *what* means the thing(s) that. The *wh-* clause must contain a verb. To highlight the action we use a form of *do* in the *wh-* clause. The highlighted phrase usually contains a bare infinitive (example above) or *to + infinitive*:

What Mike did was to take Sally to the party.

If the highlighted verb is in the continuous or perfect, the form of *do* matches it:

The boys aren't leaving Sandy at home. They are taking him to the match.

=> *What the boys are doing is taking Sandy to the match*

Old members are absent but the new members have taken their seats in the assembly.

=> *What the new members have done is taken their seats in the assembly*

We can also use *wh-* clefts to highlight a verb complement. For example, if we want to highlight the complement *stingy* in the sentence *Jean and Bob are stingy*, we can say:

wh-clause + is + emphasized complement

What Jean and Bob are is stingy!

We use this pattern most often when we want to express our opinion of something or somebody using an adjective:

'Do you think Jean and Bob are a bit cautious with their money?'

'Cautious? What they are is downright stingy!'

1D. Other types of cleft sentence

We can use *wh-* clauses with *when*, *where*, *why* and *who* to highlight a person, a place, a time and a reason, but we usually use an introductory noun phrase (underlined below). The *wh-* clause acts like an ordinary relative clause:

X Who we forgot to invite was Ian.

✓ The one (who) we forgot to invite was Ian

person *The guy who told me about the new club was Zack.*

place *The house where I used to live is near here.*

time *The day (when) we left was the saddest day of my life.*

reason *The reason (why) they never told me is they don't trust me.*

We can emphasise an item (described by a noun phrase or a verb phrase) with *the (only/last) thing* or *all*:

The thing I most disliked about the movie was the scene in the graveyard

The only thing we want is a chance to air our grievances.

The last thing we did was pack the kettle.

All we're asking for is to be given a chance

We can also use *the (only) thing* with a negative verb:

The thing we won't do is repair goods bought in other shops.

The only thing we didn't find was the key to the cellar.

1E. Reversed cleft sentences

We can reverse the order of the parts in wh- cleft sentences and put the emphasised part at the beginning:

Taking Sandy to the match is what the boys are doing.

Zack was the guy who told me about the new club.

There is a form in spoken English similar to a reversed cleft using *this* and *that*:

We have to get off here => This is where we have to get off.

They told me the same thing => That's what they told me.

Note: We only use reversed *it* clefts in a formal literary style. We put the emphasised part before *it*:

And thus Cezanne it was that took the first steps on the road to Impressionism.

2. FRONTING

2A. Fronting objects and complements

In spoken English we sometimes want to make a strong contrast with something in a previous statement. We can do this with objects and complements by ‘fronting’ them (moving them to the front of the clause), which makes them more emphatic:

‘She’s such a lovely person; so friendly and reliable.’

*‘She may be friendly but she isn’t reliable.’ => **Friendly** she may be, but **reliable** she isn’t!’*

We can also front demonstrative pronouns for emphasis:

*I disagree with **that**. => **That** I disagree with.*

We can use fronting to help the flow of spoken or written information by putting the known information at the beginning of the sentence:

*The house was large and sprawling, with two wings and a dark attic. Hilary spent most of her time in the drawing room or the garden. **The attic** she rarely visited.*

2B. Fronting adjective phrases; *also* and *such*

When we want to start a sentence with known information or we want to make an emphatic comparison with information in a previous sentence, we can use a comparative or superlative phrase at the beginning. We use a form of the verb *be* followed by the subject :

*The first band was dire. **Much more exciting** was Red Heat, the second group to play.*

*Many of the monuments are truly awesome. **Best of all** is the Colosseum.*

*The actors were a mixed bunch. **Least inspiring** of the lot was Pacino.*

We can use a similar pattern with *also* and *such*:

*Members of the royal family attended the funeral. **Also** at the service were several ambassadors.*

*They led a life of abject poverty. **Such** is the fate of most illegitimate children in this province.*

We can emphasise an adjective by using **so + adjective + a form of be + subject + a that clause**:

***So intense** was the heat (that) the firefighters were unable to enter the building for two hours.*

2C. Fronting adverbials and infinitives; as and though

We can put known information at the beginning of a sentence by putting adverbial phrases describing position or place (e.g. *At the back of the house*), verbs of position and movement (e.g. *stand, attach, lie*) and to + infinitive forms in the front position, with inversion of the subject and verb *be*:

At the back of the house was an untidy garden, much of which was taken up by a large and unkempt lawn. *Standing in the corner of the garden* was a massively overgrown silver birch tree which towered over the roof of the garage. *Attached to the roof* was an unsightly FM aerial.

For years I have been writing to the President in the White House. To meet him is my most fervent wish.

We can also front an infinitive form when it ‘echoes’ an earlier verb:

He said he would arrive on time.

And he did (arrive on time).

=> *And arrive on time he did.*

We can front verbs and adjectives using *as* and *though*:

Battered though he was, he never lost his will to succeed.

Try as she might, she simply couldn't open the jam jar.

3. INVERSION

3A. Subject-verb inversion

We sometimes put a verb or verb phrase in front of the subject after adverbs of place (e.g. *on, in, here, there, outside, opposite*) and adverbs of time (e.g. *next, then, first, now, finally*). We can use a form of *be* or verbs of place and movement (e.g. *stand, sit, lie, come, go, climb, run, sail, fly*) before the subject. We often use this pattern to form a link with the information in the previous sentence, and it is common in formal English:

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place adverbs + be or verbs of place/movement	<i>Here lies the body of our late lamented sovereign.</i> <i>On one wall there was a beautiful rambling rose. Opposite stood an ancient oak tree over a charming wishing well.</i>
time adverbs + be or verbs of place/movement	<i>For the first hour the teams seemed evenly matched. Then came the turning point in the game as Ed scored.</i> <i>That was the Final installment. Next is the news.</i>

Note: We don't use inversion if the subject of the clause is a pronoun:

Here comes the bus. *X Here comes it* *✓ Here it comes.*

We can also use inversion in *as* and *than* clauses in formal English:

Mr Slater is expecting a pay rise, as are several other salesmen in the team.

I'm afraid her proposals are no more feasible than are those James presented.

We also use inversion in certain fixed expressions, often with subjunctives :

So be it. *Long live the king!*

3B. Subject-auxiliary inversion

We sometimes put an auxiliary (do, have, should, can, etc.) before the subject in statements; the rest of the verb phrase follows the subject. We use this pattern of inversion for emphasis in the following cases:

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<p>after adverbs with ‘restrictive’/ negative meaning (e.g. <i>hardly</i>, <i>scarcely</i>, <i>rarely</i>, <i>little</i>, <i>never</i>)</p>	<p><i>Little did we realise the true extent of his involvement.</i></p> <p><i>Never have I seen such a disturbing sight,</i></p> <p><i>Hardly had I arrived when Suzy collared me.</i></p>
<p><i>only</i> + time expression or prepositional phrase</p>	<p><i>Only later did he manage to get permission.</i></p> <p><i>Only with a great deal of effort was he able to escape.</i></p>
<p>(<i>in</i>) <i>no way</i>, <i>at no time</i>, <i>under no circumstances</i>, <i>on no account</i></p>	<p><i>No way am I going to wear that! (informal)</i></p> <p><i>Under no circumstances can refunds be given.</i></p>
<p><i>not</i> + <i>only</i>/ time expression/ person or thing</p>	<p><i>Not only is he late, he hasn’t even brought a present.</i></p> <p><i>Not since the sixties has a pop group won such acclaim.</i></p> <p><i>Not a single stone was left unturned in the search.</i></p>
<p><i>no sooner ... than</i></p>	<p><i>No sooner had we set out than the skies opened.</i></p>
<p>clauses beginning with <i>neither</i> or <i>nor</i></p>	<p><i>They have no intention of paying and neither have we.</i></p> <p><i>We couldn’t face the customers and nor could the boss.</i></p>
<p>clauses beginning with <i>may</i> which describe a strong wish</p>	<p><i>May he live to regret this decision!</i></p>

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after fronted comparisons <i>also, such and so</i>	<i>The captain is refusing to play under these conditions and so is the rest of the team.</i>
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Note: Expressions with *no, not*, etc. not listed above (e.g. *no doubt*) cannot be inverted:

X No doubt will he give us a key. ✓ *No doubt he will give us a key.*

Note: We do not invert the subject and auxiliary after *only* if there is no time expression or prepositional phrase immediately after it:

X Only can members park there.

✓ *Only members can park there.*

✓ *Only on Sundays can members park there.*

C PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

Read the information in the box then complete the replies. Each reply must contain a cleft sentence. The exercise begins with an example (0).

Nick turned up late for work on Monday because he got stuck in a traffic jam on the ring road. Luckily Nick has a mobile phone so he was able to phone his boss and warn her that he would be late. She was furious but managed to reschedule an important meeting for the afternoon.

0 ‘Didn’t the boss turn up late on Monday?’

‘No, it...**was Nick who turned up**.....late on Monday.’

1. ‘Nick was late because he overslept, wasn’t he?’

‘No, it..... that he was late.’

2. ‘How on earth did Nick let the boss know he’d be late?’

‘Well, what call her from his mobile phone.’

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3. 'Wasn't Nick late on Wednesday?'

'No, that he was late.'

4. 'Nick's boss had to start the meeting without him, didn't she?'

'No, what she the afternoon.'

5. 'Didn't Nick get stuck in a traffic jam in the town centre?'

'No, not the town centre; it got stuck.'

6. 'Didn't the boss have to reschedule that meeting because the client didn't turn up?'

'No, it had to reschedule the meeting.'

7. 'Nick rang the boss to give her the sales figures, didn't he?'

'No, it that he rang her.'

8. I heard the boss was a little annoyed with Nick for being late.

'No, she wasn't "a little annoyed". What !'

Q 2.

For each of the sentences below, write a new sentence as similar as possible in meaning to original sentence, but using the words given in **bold**.

0 Sebastian left the job because of the long working hours.

why *The reason why Sebastian left the job was the long working hours.*

1. We have to wait here.

this

2 We just need five minutes to fix it.

all

3 Jennifer started the strike.

person

4 I'm not questioning his dedication.

isn't

5 These men are totally ruthless.

what

6 I used to live around the corner.

the place

7 It was your next door neighbour who complained.

the one

8 We inherited everything except the house.

only thing

9 You know the sales assistant told me exactly the same thing.

that's

10 I want you to copy this down in your notebooks.

to do

11 First of all we checked the insurance details.

first thing

12 The climbers reached the peak at six o'clock.

was

13 We're taking the au-pair with us.

doing

14 Before leaving we switched off the power supply.

last thing

15 They moved to Andalucía because of the climate.

reason

16 The company has imposed a ban on private e-mails.

has done

17 The only thing we want is our money back.

all

18 Our boss told us the news.

it

19 I want you to appreciate that it's not my fault.

what

20 The introduction of stamp duties led to the loss of the American colonies,

that

Q 3.

Make these sentences more emphatic by 'fronting' part of them. Do not use any additional words.

0 I can't stand hypocrisy. => ***Hypocrisy I can't stand!***

1 Though he was exhausted, he managed to reach the finishing line.

2 My life's ambition is to make the pilgrimage to Mecca.

3 The ninth symphony is his most sublime work.

4 I really can't accept that proposal.

5 An enormous gold Buddha was placed on the altar.

6 The Cresta Run is much more challenging for the dedicated skier

7 Several sharp criticisms of ministerial conduct were also included in the report.

8 An old man was lying in the shop doorway.

9 It proved impossible to get to the bottom of the mystery.

10 The pilot couldn't regain control because the damage was so severe.

Q 4.

In twelve of the following sentences there are mistakes with word order and missing auxiliaries. Tick (✓) the correct sentences and then find the mistakes and correct them.

1. They're going to complain about this and so are we.
2. Little we knew the full extent of his involvement in the fraud.
3. The sales director is resigning and so most of the marketing team are.
4. I tried to get there by nine, only was there a traffic jam on the motorway.
5. Over there stood the three-metre tall statue of Lenin.
6. The embassy refuses to intervene. Well, so it be.
7. Tomorrow the first day is of the rest of your life.
8. Long live the glorious republic!
9. No way is the boss treating me like that and getting away with it!
10. Under no circumstances latecomers will be admitted to the auditorium.
11. Armando and Josepha are quite destitute and such the condition is of many of the refugees.
12. Now the time is for wise investors to think seriously about buying Treasury Bonds.
13. Rarely had we encountered such friendly and positive attitudes.
14. Oh look – here comes the procession at last.
15. Not since Kubrick's 2001 a director has made such an intellectually challenging sci-fi movie.
16. The government's proposals are unrealistic, as those are of the opposition.
17. Opposite this house ran the old city walls.
18. Only with the greatest of luck he managed to escape from the rising flood waters.
19. May John and Carol have a long and happy life together.
20. No doubt didn't he realise the consequences of his actions.

Q 5.

Rewrite the replies in these mini-dialogues to make them more emphatic by using suitable structures (cleft sentences, fronting or inversion) to emphasise the underlined items. The exercise begins with two examples (0) and (00).

0 'That dress looks expensive.'

'No, the shoes were expensive, not the dress.'

=> '**No, it's the shoes that were expensive, not the dress.**'

00 'Did Darren help you with the decorating?'

'No, he did the wallpapering, nothing else.'

=> '**No, the only thing he did was the wallpapering**'

1.

'Jerry says Liz is going to quit her job at the bank.'

'I find that really hard to believe.'

'You look as though you're destroying that rose bush.'

'No, I'm just cutting off the dead flower heads.'

'Are you sure you brought everything with you?'

We left the personal stereo behind, that's all.'

'Didn't you own a Volkswagen Golf once?'

'No, my brother owned one.'

'He said the speech would shake them up a bit.'

'And it certainly did shake them up.'

'I thought the car chase and the scene in the airport were brilliant.'

'But the explosion on the jumbo jet was best of all.'

'I think we should try to give them first aid.'

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‘No, we should wait for the ambulance to arrive.’

‘So what was so awful about the view from your hotel room?’

‘Well, a huge electricity pylon was standing right outside the bedroom window.’

‘You’ve always wanted to buy a cottage in the country, haven’t you?’

‘Yes, my greatest ambition has always been to own a cottage.’

‘You’re all leaving on Saturday, aren’t you?’

‘No, we’re going on Friday.’

Q 6.

In the following magazine article ten emphatic sentences have been changed and underlined. Rewrite the sentences in their original emphatic form using the clues in brackets. The first one has been done as an example (0).

RAP JUMPING ?

NO WAY, JOSÉ!

I’m quite sporty and I love a new challenge, especially if it’s a little bit risky. I often try out new things with my friends Tony and Bruce. (0) In fact Bruce told me about his new hobby – rap jumping. (1) I’ve done bungee jumping before – that’s the sport where you jump off a crane or bridge with your feet attached to a long length of elastic – so I had some idea what he was talking about. Bruce promised me that (2) rap jumping was more exciting and a lot more dangerous than bungee jumping, and (3) he didn’t tell me too much about it to keep me in suspense. So of course I was dying to give it a go.

(4) But Tony actually took me for my first rap jump. (5) He’s the real daredevil. We went to the top of this tall building which had a sort of gantry overhanging the edge. (6) I could see a rope and a harness hanging from the gantry.

‘Oh, I understand,’ I said to Tony, ‘I get into the harness and then lean back over the edge and lower myself down – it’s like abseiling.’

‘No, no,’ said Tony, ‘(7) You lean forward and walk down.’

I began to feel a little sick. I don’t normally suffer from a fear of heights because I avoid it by looking up or sideways. (8) I can’t cope with seeing the ground. The idea of going over the edge facing downwards was just too much for me. ‘(9) I’m not doing that.’ I announced.

Well, would you have done it?

0 (it) => *In fact it was Bruce who told me about his new hobby.*

1 (fronting)

2 (not only)

3 (fronting)

4 (it)

5 (the one)

6 (all)

7 (What)

8 (It's)

9 (No way)

D ANSWER KEY FOR DIAGNOSTIC TEST

1. It was the shellfish that made Jasmine sick.
2. It was the office keys (that) Greg lost./ It was Greg that lost the office keys.
3. What he's doing is approaching the problem from an entirely new angle.
4. What they've done is unforgivable!
5. The reason (why) I came by bus is (that) my car has broken down.
6. All I want is a second chance.
7. Zack was the guy who told me about the new club.
8. This is where we have to leave our bags and coats.
9. That's what they told me.
10. Lucky in love he isn't!
11. Much more interesting were the interactive displays.

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12. Also at the ceremony was the Lord Chancellor.
13. So intense was the heat (that) the firefighters were unable to enter the building.
14. Stuck to my windscreen was a parking ticket.
15. Defeated though they were, they managed to keep smiling.
16. Beside the river bank stands a gnarled old oak tree.
17. Next is/ it's the midnight movie.
18. Seldom has the government suffered such an overwhelming defeat.
19. No sooner had we arrived than they announced that the show was cancelled.
20. Under no circumstances can refunds be given.

E ANSWER KEY FOR PRACTICE EXERCISE

Q 1.

- 1 No, it was because of the traffic jam that he was late.
- 2 Well, what he did was (to) call her from his mobile phone
- 3 No, it was on Monday that he was late.
- 4 No, what she did was (to) reschedule the meeting for the afternoon.
- 5 No, not the town centre; it was on the ring road that Nick got stuck.
- 6 No. it was because Nick was late that she had to reschedule the meeting.
- 7 No, it was to warn her that he would be late that he rang her.
- 8 What she was was furious!

Q 2.

1. This is where we have to wait.
2. All we need is five minutes (to fix it).
3. The person who started the strike was Jennifer./ Jennifer was the person who started the strike.

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4. It isn't his dedication (that) I'm questioning.
5. What these men are is totally ruthless.
6. The place where I used to live is around the corner.
7. The one who complained was your next door neighbour./ Your next door neighbour was the one who complained.
8. The only thing we didn't inherit was the house./ The house was the only thing we didn't inherit.
9. That's exactly what the sales assistant told me.
10. What I want you to do is (to) copy this down in your notebooks.
11. The first thing we did was (to) check the insurance details.
12. It was at six o'clock (that) the climbers reached the peak./ It was six o'clock when ...
13. What we're doing is taking the au-pair with us.
14. The last thing we did (before leaving) was (to) switch off the power supply.
15. The reason (why) they moved to Andalucía was the climate./The climate was the reason (why) they moved to Andalucía.
16. What the company has done is imposed a ban on private e-mails.
17. All we want is our money back.
18. It was our boss who told us the news.
19. What I want you to appreciate is that it's not my fault.
20. It was the introduction of stamp duties that led to the loss of the American colonies.

Q 3.

1. Exhausted though he was, he managed to reach the finishing line.
2. To make the pilgrimage to Mecca is my life's ambition.
3. His most sublime work is the ninth symphony.
4. That proposal I really can't accept.

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5. Placed on the altar was an enormous gold Buddha.
6. Much more challenging for the dedicated skier is the Cresta Run.
7. Also included in the report were several sharp criticisms of ministerial conduct.
8. Lying in the shop doorway was an old man.
9. To get to the bottom of the mystery proved impossible.
10. So severe was the damage that the pilot couldn't regain control.

Q 4.

1 ✓

2 we knew => did we know

3 and so most of the marketing team-are => so are most of the marketing team

4 was there => there was

5 ✓

6 so it be => so be it

7 Tomorrow the first day is => Tomorrow is the first day

8 ✓

9 ✓

10 latecomers will => will latecomers

11 such the condition is => such is the condition

12 the time is => is the time

13 ✓

14 ✓

15 a director has made => has a director made

16 as those are => as are those

17 ✓

18 he managed to escape => did he manage to escape

19 ✓

20 didn't he => he didn't

Q 5.

1 That I find really hard to believe.

2 No, what I'm doing is cutting off the dead flower heads.

3 All we left behind was the personal stereo./The only thing ...

4 No, it was my brother (who owned one).

5 And shake them up it certainly did.

6 (But) best of all was the explosion on the jumbo jet.

7 No, what we should do is wait for the ambulance to arrive.

8 Well, (standing) right outside the bedroom window was a huge electricity pylon.

9 Yes, to own a cottage has always been my greatest ambition.

10 No, it's (on) Friday that we're going.

Q 6.

1. Bungee jumping I've done before.
2. not only was rap jumping more exciting than bungee jumping, it was also a lot more dangerous./ rap jumping was not only more exciting but also a lot more dangerous than bungee jumping.
3. to keep me in suspense he didn't tell me too much about it
4. But it was Tony who actually took me for my first rap jump.
5. He's the one who's the real daredevil.
6. All I could see was a rope and a harness hanging from the gantry.

7. What you do is lean forward and walk down.
8. It's seeing the ground that I can't cope with.
9. No way am I doing that!

Consolidation tasks:

1 Put each verb in brackets into an appropriate verb form.

Reporter Philip Taggart visits a farm where the sheep are super fit!

Farmers, as you may (1) ...know. (know), (2) (have) a hard time of it in Britain lately, and (3) (turn) to new ways of earning income from their land. This (4) (involve) not only planting new kinds of crops, but also some strange ways of making money, the most unusual of which has got to be sheep racing. Yes, you (5) (hear) me correctly! A farmer in the west of England now (6) (hold) sheep races on a regular basis, and during the past year over 100,000 people (7) (turn up) to watch the proceedings. 'I (8) (pass) the farm on my way to the sea for a holiday,' one punter told me, 'and I (9) (think) I'd have a look. I (10) (not/believe) it was serious, to tell you the truth.' According to a regular visitor, betting on sheep is more interesting than betting on horses. 'At proper horse races everyone (11) (already/study) the form of the horses in advance, and there are clear favourites. But nobody (12) (hear) anything about these sheep! Most people (13) (find) it difficult to tell one from another in any case.' I (14) (stay) to watch the races, and I must admit that I (15) (find) it quite exciting. In a typical race, half a dozen sheep (16) (race) downhill over a course of about half a mile. Food (17) (wait) for them at the other end of the track, I ought to add! The sheep (18) (run) surprisingly fast, although presumably they (19) (not/eat) for a while just to give them some motivation. At any rate, the crowd around me (20) (obviously/enjoy) their day out at the races, judging by their happy faces and the sense of excitement.

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Complete the text with one suitable word in each space.

Some people always have good advice to give you, but only after the event. You (1) have come across the type, who somehow always know what you (2)have done when it has become too late. By now I (3) spot them a mile off. It (4) be because I have had so much practice. Last week, for example, I (5) to take my car to the garage because the lights weren't working. It was an expensive job, but I decided that I (6) as well pay, and get it over quickly. 'You (7) have told me,' said a friend when I was telling him how much I (8) to pay. 'I (9) easily have fixed it for you. Then you (10) not have wasted so much money.' You (11) imagine how I felt! Actually, he (12) probably have made a mess of the job, and I (13) well have ended up paying more. But it does seem strange that everyone else (14) know exactly what I (15) to do.