

- **Read the dialogues** below to see how English is used in everyday situations.
- **Look at the tips** for the dos and don'ts of social English.
- **Study the vocabulary lists** and learn useful words and phrases.
- **Complete the exercises** and test your language knowledge.
- **Pull out this page** and use it as a reference tool and learning aid.



Listen to exercises
about directions
on our CD/cassette

EVERYDAY ENGLISH

LANGUAGE

Language tips to pull out and keep



Asking for and giving directions

When asking for directions, be polite and listen carefully. When giving directions, use precise language and speak clearly. Read these dialogues and learn some of the expressions you need to carry out these tasks successfully.

1. Looking for a post office

Kate wants to buy some stamps, so she asks a man where the post office is.

Kate: **Excuse me?**

Man: Yeah?

Kate: I'm looking for a post office. **Is there** one **nearby**?

Man: Yeah, if you keep going straight ahead and take the second turning on the right...

Kate: OK...

Man: ... the post office is on your left.

Kate: Great. The second turning — where that blue car's coming out?

Man: That's it. **You can't miss it.**

Tip! Use "Excuse me" to attract people's attention or before disturbing them.

Tip! In sentences with "there is", the subject comes after the verb: "There's a policeman over there." In the question form, the order is reversed: "Is there a post office...?"

Tip! The adverb "nearby" means "not far away". It usually comes after the verb: "My parents live nearby."

Tip! "You can't miss it", meaning "It's very easy to find", is a very common expression when giving directions.

2. Getting help

Barbara is looking for the library. A man comes up to her.

Man: You look a bit lost. **Are you OK?**

Barbara: Well, I'm trying to find the library. **I was told** it was here.

Man: Yeah, but **they** moved last week.

Barbara: Oh, no wonder I can't find it!

Man: It's in Bridge Street now.

Barbara: Bridge Street?

Man: It's only **a five-minute walk** from here. Can you see the fire station over there?

Barbara: Yes.

Man: Well, it's behind that. **You'd better** hurry, though. I think they close at 5 o'clock.

Tip! "Are you OK?" is an indirect way of saying "Can I help you?"

Tip! Passive forms ("I was told") are used when it is not important to know who did something.

Tip! "They" is often used to describe a vague group of people: "They're going to build a new car park here soon."

Tip! Don't say "a five-minutes walk". There is no "s" in this type of word combination ("a ten-euro note", "a two-hour flight").

Tip! The expression "You'd better..." is useful when giving advice. The "d" stands for "had".

3. Trying to find a bike shop

Michael has got the address of a bike shop, but he can't find it. He goes into a newsagent's to get some help.

Michael: **Hi!** I'm trying to find a bike shop. **It's supposed to be** around here somewhere.

Newsagent: Have you got the address?

Michael: Yes, it's 86 Abbot Road.

Newsagent: Well, this is Abbot Road. Number 86... Oh, now I remember. There **used to be** a bike shop there. But they moved.

Michael: You don't know where they are now, do you?

Newsagent: Yeah, in the **high street**, directly **opposite** the Red Lion.

Tip! Although Michael doesn't know the newsagent, he uses an informal greeting.

Tip! "Be supposed to" + infinitive is often used like "should" to talk about something you expect or what is expected by others: "We're supposed to start work at 9." The pronunciation is [sə'pəʊzɪ tu].

Tip! Be careful with the pronunciation of "used to". It's ['ju:st tu].

Tip! In Britain, a "high street" is the main street in a town with a lot of shops and businesses along it.

Tip! Don't say "opposite-of": "We live opposite the station."

newsagent ['nju:z,eɪdʒənt] UK Zeitungshandlung, -händler

4. Getting the route US

Sally is using a map to tell Jeremy how to get to her house.
Sally: Look at this big **junction** here. Make sure you get onto **I-80** East, not West — it's a little tricky.

Jeremy: East. OK.

Sally: Then follow the Interstate until you see signs for Bradford. The first Bradford exit, **Exit 23**, will put you onto this **two-lane road** here.

Jeremy: That's **Route** 16 North, isn't it?

Sally: Right. Now, at the second **light**, turn left and keep going until you see a McDonald's. **Make a right**, and you'll be **on** Basil Street. Our house is right here.

Tip! In the US, the names of Interstate highways ("motorways" in Britain) begin with the letter "I". Highway exits have numbers. "Routes" are smaller roads that have numbers.

Tip! A "two-lane road" (US) has one lane of traffic going in each direction.

Tip! Instead of "light", you normally use the plural noun "traffic lights" in British English.

Tip! "Make a right" (US) is another way of saying "turn right".

Tip! Instead of "on Basil Street", you say "in" in Britain.

junction ['dʒʌŋkʃən]

Autobahnkreuz

5. Visiting a friend

Rachel is giving Cindy directions to her house on the phone.
Rachel: OK. It's **dead** easy. Have you got a pen?

Cindy: Yeah. **Fire away!**

Rachel: Right. When you come out of the station, go across the road and into the park.

Cindy: OK.

Rachel: When you get to the other side of the park, **you'll be standing** in front of a big church. And **on the left of** the church, you'll see Pretoria Road. Our house is number 14.

Cindy: Great. That sounds quite **straightforward**.

Rachel: It is. It takes about ten minutes from the station.

Tip! The adverb "dead" is used in certain informal expressions to mean "very" or "completely": "dead tired", "dead certain", "dead right". The adverb "deadly" means "able to kill people": "a deadly weapon".

Tip! Rachel uses the future continuous form "you'll be standing" without a continuous meaning. She is describing something that can be expected to happen.

Tip! Don't say "on the left from ...". Use "of". "On the left of the picture, you can see my grandmother."

Tip! Don't mix up "straight ahead" (*geradeaus*, see dialogue 1) and "straightforward" (*einfach*).

fire away! [ˌfaɪə əˈweɪ] *ifml.*

schieß los!

EXERCISES

1. Which words are missing? The first letters are given.

■ Excuse me, I'm trying to find a bank. Is there one

(a) **n** _____?

■ Yeah, if you keep going (b) **s** _____

and take the first (c) **t** _____ on the left, you'll find one there. It's not far. You can't (d) **m** _____ it.

■ Thanks very much.

2. Put these sentences into the correct order.

- No, it's been moved. It's in Station Road now.
- No, it's just along here. First turning on the right.
- Thanks a lot.
- Well, I'm looking for the post office. Isn't it here any longer?
- Station Road? Is that far?
- You look a bit lost. Are you OK?

3. Put in "between", "in", "next to" and "opposite".

- The bike shop is right _____ the camera shop.
- The bike shop is directly _____ the Red Lion.
- The bike shop is _____ the camera shop and the butcher's.
- The bike shop is _____ the middle of the high street.

4. Mark the correct words.

Leave I-70 (a) **at** / **by** / **on** Exit 28, then follow the road (b) **from** / **in** / **to** Bloomington (c) **at** / **by** / **for** about a mile. Turn left (d) **at** / **on** / **to** the light, and you'll find yourself (e) **at** / **in** / **on** Cork Street.

5. Translate into English.

a) *Hast du etwas zum Schreiben?*

b) *Geh über die Straße und durch den Park.*

c) *Auf der linken Seite ist unser Haus.*

d) *Es sind fünf Minuten vom Bahnhof.*