

- **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
on growing up
on our CD/cassette

LANGUAGE

EVERYDAY ENGLISH

Language tips by Robert Parr



Growing up

We all remember growing up, playing with brothers, sisters and friends and going to school. More often, though, we recall specific events that stick in our mind. Read these scenes and learn some expressions for talking about growing up.

1. You big-head!

Lucy, 17, is talking to her new boyfriend, Rick.
 Lucy: **How come** you can play the guitar so **well**?
 Rick: Lots of practice.
 Lucy: When did you start?
 Rick: When I was about 10. I got **one** for Christmas.
 Lucy: Could you read music then?
 Rick: No, and I still can't. I just play by ear.
 Lucy: You **big-head**!
 Rick: It's true! **Anyway**, what about you? What sort of things did you do when you were 10? Read stories about horses?
 Lucy: Look, not all 10-year-old girls are **into** horses!

Tips!

- "How come...?" is used in spoken English to ask why a particular situation exists: "How come you're so angry?"
- The adverb "well" describes a verb: "You speak English really well." The adjective "good" describes a noun: "Your English is really good."
- The word "one" here refers back to "guitar".
- Rick uses "anyway" to change the subject.
- In informal English, "into" is used to talk about the activities people enjoy: "Are you into yoga?"

big-head ['bɪghed] *ifml.*

Angeber(in)

read music [ˌrɪd 'mjuːzɪk]

Noten lesen

2. Look at his chubby cheeks!

Anne is showing Ruth some old family photos.
 Ruth: Who's that?
 Anne: Mark. Don't you recognize him?
 Ruth: I didn't **realize** he was older than you. Look at his **chubby** cheeks!
 Anne: Yes, he's thinner now, isn't he?
 Ruth: Wow! Your mum's **hair**!
 Anne: Yeah, it must have been the height of fashion then.
 Ruth: Did she want to have three children?
 Anne: I'm not sure, **to be honest**. I've never asked her.
 Ruth: Where's your dad?
 Anne: He took the photo!

Tips!

- The verb "realize" is very common in spoken and written English. Here, it means to know and understand something: "I never realized you were from South Africa."
- The adjective "chubby" means slightly fat (in a healthy way) and is usually used to describe babies and small children.
- When "hair" means all the hair on a person's head, it is an uncountable noun, so you say "He's got dark hair", not "He's got dark hairs."
- The expression "to be honest" is used when you tell someone what you really think. "To be honest, I don't really like her."

height of fashion [ˌhaɪt əv 'fæʃən]

der letzte Schrei

3. I taught myself

Adam, who is 7, is asking his father some questions.
 Adam: Did you like school, Dad?
 Paul: Well, it was OK. I wasn't very **good at** maths. I used to **copy** from my friends.
 Adam: I'm good at maths!
 Paul: Well, you must have got that from your mum, then.
 Adam: And reading?
 Paul: That was funny. One day, **Grammy was reading** to me, and I remember thinking: "Hey, I can read that myself!" So from one day to the next, I could do it. I **taught myself**, really.
 Adam: Cool!

Tips!

- Be careful with the preposition after "good": "Are you good at telling jokes?"
- Here, the word "copy" means to look at somebody else's work and write the same.
- "Grammy" is another word for "Grandma". Paul is talking about his mother and Adam's grandmother.
- Notice how Paul uses the past continuous ("was reading") to describe a background event that is interrupted by a more important event ("I remember thinking").
- Don't mix up "learn" and "teach". If you learn something, you get information, knowledge or skills. If you teach something, you give information, knowledge or skills: "Can you teach me a card trick?"

4. Dad hit the roof!

Arthur and his brother Edward have gone back to the street where they **grew up**.

Arthur: Here's where I fell off my bike. God, was that painful!

Edward: That was Tom Price. He tried to put a stick between the **spokes** of your front wheel.

Arthur: Tom Price. An **oddball**, wasn't he?

Edward: But very **quick off the mark**.

Arthur: He'll be something like a bank manager now.

Edward: Did he get into trouble afterwards?

Arthur: No. I did, though. The bike was a complete **write-off**! Dad **hit the roof**!

Tips!

- Use "grow up" to talk about the things that happened when you were a child: "I didn't see my father much while I was growing up."
- "Oddball" is an informal word that describes a person whose behaviour is strange.
- If you are "quick off the mark", you understand and react quickly.
- A "write-off" describes a vehicle (usually a car) that is so badly damaged that it can't be repaired.
- If somebody "hits the roof", he or she gets very angry.

spoke [spəʊk]

Speiche

5. Meat and two veg

Penny is chatting to her 14-year-old daughter, Janine.

Penny: Don't you want some of this **cauliflower**?

Janine: Only if I can have ketchup with it.

Penny: Ketchup? **Ugh!**

Janine: I bet you didn't like cauliflower when you were a child.

Penny: You're right — nor **gooseberries**, nor **spinach**, nor **parsnips**.

Janine: **See?**

Penny: And on Sundays we sometimes had **the whole lot**. **Meat and two veg**, followed by gooseberry pie.

Janine: Poor you!

Tips!

- "Ugh!", pronounced [ʊx] or [ʌg], is the sound people make when something is unpleasant.
- Janine uses the verb "see" in the meaning of "understand": "Do you see what I mean?"
- When Penny says "the whole lot", she is referring to gooseberries, spinach and parsnips.
- When British people say "meat and two veg [vedʒ]", they are talking about a cooked meal consisting of meat with two types of vegetable.

cauliflower ['kɒliːflaʊə]

Blumenkohl

gooseberry ['ɡuːzbəri]

Stachelbeere

parsnips ['pɑːsnɪps]

Pastinake(n)

spinach ['spɪnɪdʒ]

Spinat

Spotlight 4/05

EXERCISES

1. Which short word is missing?

- Did you read stories _____ cowboys and Indians when you were young?
- You never told me that you were _____ jazz!
- Is it true that you can play the guitar _____ ear?
- What _____ you? What food did you like as a child?

2. Form four sentences.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| a) Who took... | 1. music, but I don't play an instrument. |
| b) They never realized... | 2. this photo of you? |
| c) I can read... | 3. three children. |
| d) They had... | 4. I could speak Spanish. |

3. Identify the correct word.

- He **learned** – **taught** me how to play the piano.
- I didn't **realize** – **recognize** your voice on the phone.
- You had lovely blonde **hair** – **hairs** as a child.

4. Complete the sentences below, using these words.

mark • roof • trouble • write-off

- After the accident, the car was a complete _____.
- We got into big _____ for breaking a classroom window.
- When the police brought me home, my mum hit the _____.
- My friend Danny was quick off the _____, but he was a real oddball.

5. Which word is it? The first letter is given.

- It's a thin piece of metal in a bicycle wheel: **s**_____
- It's a vegetable with large green leaves: **s**_____
- It's a person who thinks he or she is clever and important: **b**_____
- It's the part of your face under your eyes: **c**_____