



Oxford
SCHOOL OF ENGLISH



Student Handbook

Oxford School of English

14 Friars' Entry

Oxford OX1 2BZ

Our Mission Statement at OSE

At Oxford School of English, we are dedicated to providing a quality service to all customers/clients in a professional, supportive and safe environment. Oxford School of English is committed to ensuring that the total student experience is happy, fulfilling and enriching. We aim for all student stays to be profitable and enjoyable for students with a noticeable improvement in their English language skills. Students will get the opportunity to immerse themselves in a new culture and should gain an insight into British culture as well as other cultures from around the world.

Our approach is to be student-centred in all aspects of the running of the school. In practical terms, this requires that we focus on every element of the student experience - including pre-arrival information, academic progress, English language development, cultural adjustment, personal welfare and support, university or employment guidance, extracurricular opportunities and accommodation provision. The service should provide good value for money and all school managers will continually assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the services offered.

In terms of the management of staff and running of the school, we are a learning organisation, meaning we value collaboration, sharing of knowledge and sharing of responsibility. Managers facilitate the professional development of all employees, which support the school to continually transform itself into a healthy working environment and remain competitive in the business environment.

Information, rules and conditions

- **opening hours** - the school is open from 09:00 Monday to Friday, except on public holidays and during the Christmas and New Year period. We close at 17:30.
- **punctuality** - please be on time for your classes. Students who arrive late for any lesson **will be refused entry to the classroom**.
- **placement tests** - all students must take a placement test before they start at the school, to help us assess their level and place them in the right class. This also applies to students who have passed the FCE, CAE, IELTS or TOEFL.
- **course books** - all students **must** have the textbook for their level. These usually cost around £40 and are sold in Reception. Ask in Reception for the price.
- **student lounge** - you can use the student lounge at any time. You can eat and drink there. Please do not take food or drink into the classrooms or the self-study room.
- **internet access** - free Wi-Fi is available for all students; please ask at Reception for the password.
- **self-study room** – You can study in any room that is free. Just check at Reception. You can also go to Oxfordshire County Library above the shops in Westgate shopping centre.
- **library**—our library contains grammar books / textbooks with CDs that you can borrow, and a selection of novels in original English as well as graded readers (designed for students at all levels). You can borrow or use any of these free of charge, but you must leave a £10 deposit with Reception if you want to take items home. Please ask the Director of Studies for help and advice.
- **chewing gum** is not permitted in the school.
- **smoking** - smoking is not permitted anywhere in the school building and shopping centre.
- **student cards** - if you would like an ISIC student card, please ask at school Reception. The ISIC organisation requires students to be registered as full-time, studying a minimum of 16 hours per week, and to have paid for a minimum of six months.
- **illness** – if you are ill and won't be able to attend class, please call Reception to tell us as soon as possible. You may be able to transfer your lesson to another day if you let us know early.
- **photocopier** – students are not permitted to use the photocopier in the Teachers' room. If you need to photocopy something, please ask at Reception. There is a small charge.
- **certificates & reports** – if you would like a certificate at the end of your course, please ask Reception for a certificate and report form, at least one week before your course ends. Please note that certificates will not be issued **AFTER YOU HAVE LEFT**.

Attendance

We expect all students enrolled in our school to attend 100% of their lessons. If you student are ill or cannot attend for any other reason, you must call the school to inform staff. In any case, you must attend a minimum of 80% of your lessons. If not, the school could cancel your course. If your attendance record is below 80%, you will not receive an end-of-course certificate.

Illness or Absence

Phone or email the school if you are going to miss lessons for any reason.

Missing lessons

If you miss lessons and do not tell reception you may end up with a written warning or have to speak to the Principal.

Holiday

If you want to take a holiday from school please fill in a holiday form and hand it in at reception.

Holiday forms can be found at reception.

Complaints Policy

Complaints Policy

At Oxford School of English, we are committed to providing an excellent service to all our students. However, if a student has any complaints, the following options are available:

- Students are encouraged to contact or speak directly to a member of the management team* with any concerns they may have
- Teachers are encouraged to refer students to a member of the management if a complaint is received

*The management team is: Haydar Albasri, Rosa Lucia, Harry Thain and Lauren Sula.

Please see the [Safeguarding Policy](#) on the website on complaints relating to accommodation.

- If you are not satisfied with our response, or if you feel that you are unable to raise your concerns with us directly, you may contact the Managing Director - Richard Surtee (Richard.Surtees@NCCLondon.ac.uk), or our accrediting body:

English UK: English UK, 47 Brunswick Court, Tanner St, London SE1 3LH; info@englishuk.com

Living in a Homestay

We always do our very best to ensure you enjoy your stay with our homestay in Oxford. It is an important part of your visit and we go to a lot of trouble to make you as comfortable as possible. We very much hope you like your homestay and soon feel 'at home'.

But we also understand that it is not always easy to adjust to a new family. If you booked homestay before your arrival you should already have received information about homestay accommodation from us, but here are a few guidelines to remind you and to help you settle in.

Remember that all the differences – even the differences you don't like – are an opportunity to experience a new way of life and to learn new things.

You are a guest in a private home. Please respect your family and take care of their property.

English food will be different from food in your home country. (All students are required to tell us of any special dietary requirements when they book.) **If you don't like the food, tell your homestay family (but tell them politely! If you need any help or advice, ask us).**

Meal times may also be different. Please ensure that you know what time meals are served, and be there on time. **Tell the homestay family what you are doing each day and if you are going to miss a meal, tell them at least 24 hours in advance. If you are delayed or if you change your plans, please phone them as soon as possible to let them know.**

Keep your room clean and tidy. Remember that you are a temporary member of a family and are not in a private hotel.

Do not leave wet clothes to dry in your room. Ask to use the homestay's laundry service.

Be reasonable with your use of hot water. Ask your homestay family about convenient times to use the bathroom, take only short showers (5-10 minutes), and leave the bathroom clean.

Do not smoke in the homestay home – even if you open the bedroom window. Many homestay families will not allow smoking even in the garden.

Homestay families do not allow students to use their telephone. If you need to make a call you should use your own mobile phone.

Take care of your money and valuables at all times. We trust our homestay families but even so, the school cannot take responsibility for any loss or damage. It is important that you report any loss to the school immediately.

If you are aged 18 or over you will be given a key to the homestay, make sure you keep it safe. Homestay families are trusting you with their property: do not abuse this trust. If you come home late in the evening, you should not disturb the family.

Provide your own shampoo, toothpaste and any other toiletries you need. (towels and bed linen are provided by the homestay).

Be mindful of the noise levels when calling your family at night. Noise travels!

If you are ill or unable to come to school for some other reason please telephone the school to let us know.

Keep the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the school (especially emergency numbers) and your homestay family with you at all times (not only in your mobile)

You should leave your homestay home every day after breakfast and not return before 5:00 pm unless you have arranged different times with your homestay family. You should never enter any private areas of the homestay family home.

For more information please see:

[Accommodation guidelines](#)

Safety and emergencies

General safety

Oxford - like all towns and cities in Britain - is usually a very safe place to be but, just as in most large towns and cities in the world, it is important to be sensible and to avoid taking any unnecessary risks. In particular:

- take care when you are walking at night, especially late on Friday or Saturday nights
- avoid carrying large amounts of money, jewellery or other valuables
- never leave your bags unattended



Road safety

Remember that in Britain we drive on the left. When you are walking about any town:

- take special care when crossing the road
- look in both directions
- use pedestrian crossings at all times



Pubs

Please note that in the UK it is **illegal** for people **under 18 years** old to buy or to drink alcohol.



Emergencies

If you need the **police**, an **ambulance** or **fire services** the **emergency telephone number is 999**.

You should already have two emergency numbers for the school. If not, please ask us for them.

Keep the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the Oxford School of English and your host family with you at all times and NOT just in your mobile phone. In any emergency telephone the school and the host family to tell us what is happening and where you are..



Information for our students aged 16 and 17

A warm welcome to you! We wish to make your experience at Oxford School of English memorable and rewarding and so would like you to read and understand this important information

As you will learn from living in Oxford, under British law, anyone below the age of 18 (U18) is considered to be a child and all schools, including ours and we need to make sure that you are and feel safe at all times. We therefore have special measures in place and take special care of you but you will be studying and mixing with all other students in the school. Most of our students are usually aged 19 – 24, although some are older (in fact, our oldest-ever student was 80!).

Supervision in school and on school activities

You will be supervised during lessons by our teachers, and to some degree by other staff when on the school premises.

You will **not** always be supervised during school activities and at weekend excursions that are organised by the school or by a tour operator. You may be given free time during these excursions and in the evenings after dinner but please follow our guidelines rules and advice for your safety.

Free time

In your free time, and when not engaged in any school activity, you will not be supervised, but you will have to follow our advice for your safety.

Daily sign-in

You **MUST** sign an attendance record every morning when you arrive in school. If you do not sign this register we will call you. If you are ill, you must call the school and in most cases you will have to come to school so that we can look after you.

Help!

We have a specific member of staff responsible for your welfare, who will chat to regularly and continually checks for any problems or anxieties.

Living in homestay

You must be home by 22:30. Make sure you never travel alone and that you have the emergency numbers and the homestay number with you at all times.

Discipline and Code of Conduct

We are very proud and happy to say that Oxford School of English has always been a wonderfully friendly institution and has a lovely family atmosphere, where staff and students work and study in mutual respect and harmony. Each year, more than 1,000 young people from over 50 different countries spend time in our school, make friends, improve their English and thoroughly enjoy themselves. The school's design and our approach to education mean that we have a close relationship with our students, and we very rarely have serious problems of any kind. Being part of the school is a constant pleasure.

Nonetheless, we are required to specify reasons under which we might ask a student to leave, and the process for doing so. We understand that many of our students will be concerned by the list below, and that it might make you feel anxious about the place in which you have come to study – but please don't be alarmed. Our school is a very safe environment, and these points are here for your protection and peace of mind.

So: students may be asked to leave the school when they are found guilty of misconduct (unacceptable behaviour).

The following are examples of misconduct:

- Students using the school computers for any illegal activity, eg copying files illegally or viewing illegal images
- Students who disrupt classes or social activities
- Students who commit fraud, are dishonest, do not tell the truth about their qualifications or background or use false documents (visas, passports, qualifications) to enter the school
- Students who have not paid or do not pay their fees on time without a valid reason
- Students whose behaviour on the premises endangers the lives of other students or staff members
- Students who are violent, swear, or threaten other students or are indecent
- Students who damage school property
- Students who are noisy and/or disruptive to the neighbours in the building
- Students who harass other students or staff members. This includes bullying, and sexual or racial harassment
- Students who smoke, drink alcohol or take or possess illegal drugs on the premises
- Students whose behaviour at their homestay or other accommodation is unacceptable
- Students whose attendance is below the school's requirements or students who frequently arrive late for class

If an incident is reported to the Director of Studies, a meeting is held with the student and complainant (if appropriate) to discuss the misconduct. The Director of Studies will then decide what course of action to take. For serious incidents, students will be asked to leave immediately.

The Director of Studies and/or the Principal will make the final decision. Please note that students who are asked to leave the school for misconduct may not receive a refund for any fees paid in advance.

Language Levels and Exams

Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)	Cambridge English Scale	IELTS	iBT TOEFL	OET	GLOBAL REFERENCE LEVELS GLOBAL SCALES
PROFICIENT	C2	7.5 — 9.0	113 — 120	500-400	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can express himself or herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of proficient meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	6.5 — 7.0	92 — 112	390-300	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can produce clear, well-constructed detailed texts on complex subjects.
INDEPENDENT	B2	6.0 — 5.5	62 — 91	290-200	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his or her field of specialisation. Can produce clear, well-constructed detailed texts on a wide range of subjects.
	B1	5.0 — 4.0	43 — 61	190-0	Can understand the main points of clear and standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered at work, school, leisure etc. Can describe experiences, events and dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons for opinions and plans.
BASIC	A2	3.0	32 — 42		Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate basic need.
	A1				
	Pre A1				Can understand and use familiar and everyday and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Changing level, testing & student tutorials

Your teachers and the Director of Studies will decide whether you are ready to move up to the next level. This decision is based on:

- ongoing assessment of your overall progress (and **not** only on the progress tests)
- the standard of English in each level (as this can vary from term to term)

Criteria for changing levels

Attendance:

- You can benefit fully from your course only if you attend all or most of your classes.
- If you are absent for any number of classes, you will naturally miss out on important aspects of the course, leaving 'gaps' in your knowledge and stopping you from advancing in English.
- Students who are absent from classes and return the following term, will be required to sit another placement test or may be placed in the same level as before.
- Attendance can affect your participation.

Participation:

- Teachers will also take into account how well you have participated in class when deciding student movement. This includes:
 - ⇒ completing set homework regularly
 - ⇒ contributing to class discussions
 - ⇒ actively participating in class activities
 - ⇒ showing initiative and willingness to learn
 - ⇒ a positive attitude to learning

Progress tests:

- Every second Monday you will have a test lasting 60—75 minutes. They are corrected in class time and marks are recorded.

You do not automatically qualify for level C1 if you have taken and passed the B2 First (FCE) exam. Your achievement will be measured using the above criteria.

If you feel you are in the wrong class and want to change level, you should speak to the Director of Studies who will then discuss this with your teachers. However, decisions can only be changed if there is improvement in the above criteria.

The Director of Studies is the only person who can authorise any change in level.

Student tutorials:

Students will have an opportunity to discuss their general academic progress and their individual learning plan with their teachers during students' tutorial sessions held every term during progress test times.

Homework and Self-Study Policy

Your teachers will set you regular homework which plays a very important part of your overall progress in English. You should write your homework task on the **homework sheet** or in an email. However, the best homework is the one you set yourself. This is self-study. English File 4e and Speakout 2e have dedicated student online practice that you can do after every lesson.

Homework checks that you have understood what you have done in class, and helps you prepare for something that you might be doing in the next lesson. It teaches you how to:

- learn independently
- work at your own pace
- be organised
- explore your own interests

Expectations

You are expected to complete all homework set by your teachers. In addition to the homework set, you should do some background reading, research or revision for your course. You will be expected to do at least 45 to 60 minutes of homework at least three times a week which includes activities you can do yourself in addition to specific set tasks. For example:

- Watching English language videos on YouTube etc
- Listening to podcasts
- Online course book practice
- Speaking as much English as possible with host family and fellow students in the student common room and at school socials.
- Grammar revision exercises
- Completion of course book exercises
- Practice activities from the work book
- Interviewing
- Reading
- Writing an essay, review or report
- Research – find out facts
- Preparing for a lesson
- Learning for a test

Writing homework

You will be given writing tasks to complete during your course.

Your teachers will give you feedback in 4 areas:

- **Content**
How well have you fulfilled the task? Have you written what your teacher has asked you to write?
- **Communicative achievement**
Is your language the right language for the task? Is it the right register? Will the reader understand what you are trying to say?
- **Organisation**
How well have you organised your writing? Does each sentence/paragraph follow logically from the last one?
- **Language**
Are you using the correct grammar, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling? Your teacher will look at how accurate you are, and also how much variety there is in your writing.

You should keep a copy of your corrected writing tasks and refer back to the corrections when writing your next tasks to avoid repeating the same mistakes. This will help you learn and think about how you can improve your writ-

Phonetic Symbols

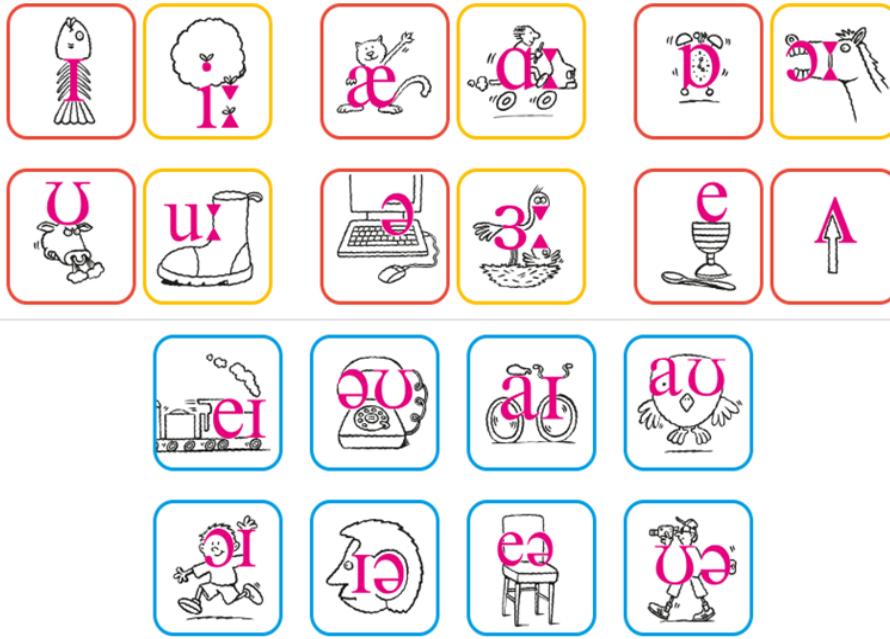
Our teachers use these symbols in class, and most dictionaries and course books use them. They show you how to pronounce sounds in English.

For more detailed information including audio:

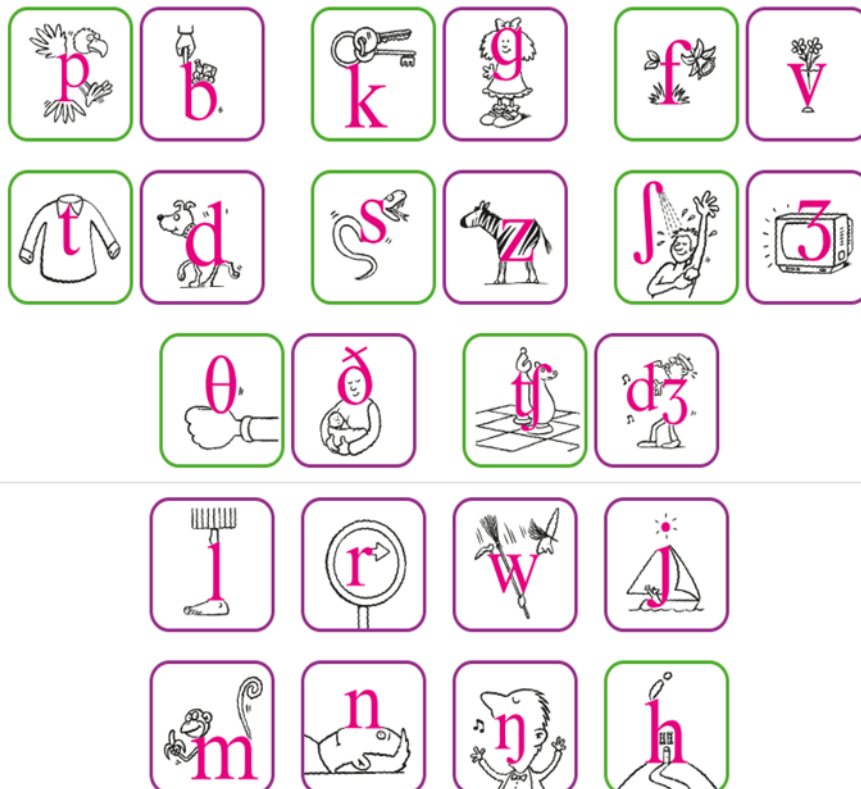
<https://www.internationalphoneticalphabet.org/ipa-charts/ipa-symbols-chart-complete/>



VOWEL SOUNDS



CONSONANT SOUNDS

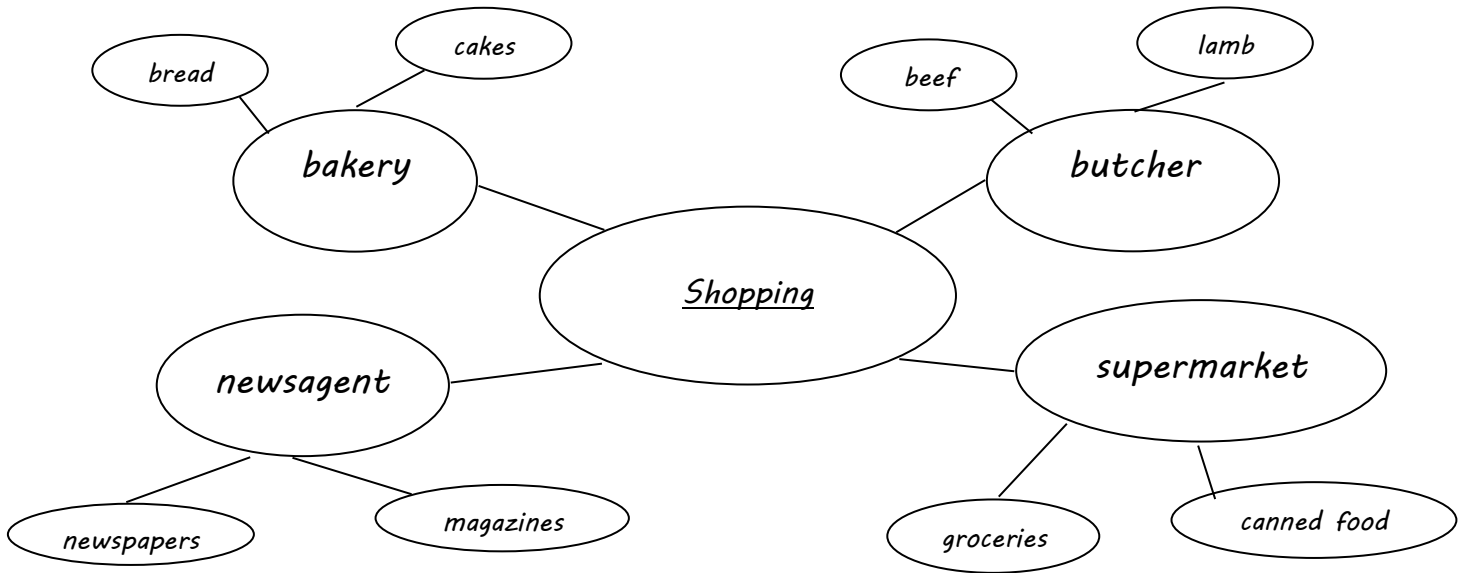


Recording Grammar & Vocabulary

It is important to take notes in a way that will help you remember. Here are some suggestions for recording vocabulary and grammar:

- Vocabulary by topic:**

Write the key word ("Shopping") in the middle of the page. Then write related words round the outside, and write related words next to these words:



- Collocations**

A collocation is two or more words that often go together. When you write down a new word, also write down some of its collocations. It is also a good idea to write an example sentence:

Shopping	
Collocations:	<i>go shopping, a shopping bag, shopping centre</i>
Example sentences	<i>At the weekend, I usually <u>go shopping</u> with my family. There are a lot of big <u>shopping centres</u> in my city.</i>

- How to use the word**

Other information that is important includes:

what are the other words in the word family?

how is it pronounced?

Shopping (noun)	/ˈʃɒpɪŋ/	<i>I like shopping for clothes.</i>
Shop (verb)	/ʃɒp/	<i>I need to shop</i>
Shop (noun)	/ʃɒp/	<i>I like to buy my clothes in small shops</i>
Shopper (noun)	/ˈʃɒpə/	<i>The market was full of shoppers buying food</i>

Grammar

Form, Function, Phonology

There are three important things to write in your notebook. They are:

Form	Function	Phonology
The structure of the grammar. Think about how a verb changes after <i>I, you, he/she/it</i> etc. Also, think about the positive (+), negative (-) and interrogative (?).	Why, when and how we use the grammar	How we pronounce the grammar. Remember, in spoken English we use a lot of contractions (<i>I've</i> instead of <i>I have</i>)

Remember to write example sentences.

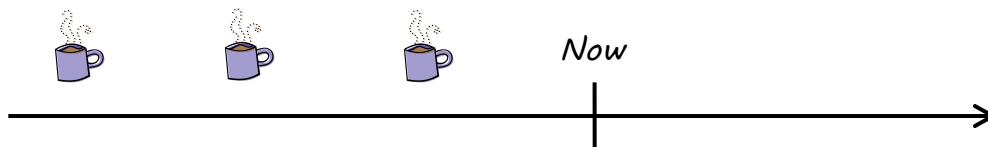
Present Perfect

Form	Function	Phonology
<p>+ <u>subject + (have) + past participle</u> <i>I have been to France/I've been to France</i></p> <p>- <u>subject + (have not) + past participle</u> <i>I haven't been to Korea.</i></p> <p>? <u>(have) + subject + past participle</u> <i>Have you been to Mexico?</i></p>	<p>We use the present perfect to talk about something that happened in the past, but we do not say when. The time we are talking about is not finished, and the thing we are talking about might happen again.</p>	<p><i>I've been to France</i> /aɪv bi:n tə 'fræns/ <i>I haven't been to Korea</i> /aɪ 'hævənt bi:n tə kə'ri:ə/</p>

“Drawing” grammar

You will see that a lot of teachers use pictures and diagrams to represent grammar. They will also ask questions to see if you understand. It is a good idea to write these down to help you remember:

Present Perfect and Past Simple



- Past simple: I had 3 cups of coffee this morning
- Present perfect: I've had 3 cups of coffee this morning

What time is it now - is it still the morning?

No - the time is finished. PAST SIMPLE

Yes - the time is not finished. PRESENT PERFECT

Using dictionaries and reference books

An English Dictionary

It is a good idea to have (and use) a monolingual dictionary - we have them in all the classrooms.

There are free online dictionaries too:



A **Increase**¹ /ɪnˈkriːs/ verb [I] ★★★ to become larger in number (= GO UP) *Our profits increased during the first half of the year.*

B

C

D

E **Increase**² /ˈɪnkriːs/ noun [C/U] ★★ a rise in the number of something *There has been an increase in the number of people studying English.*

F

G

- A The word - if the noun, verb or adjective are the same, they will have a separate entry.
- B The pronunciation - see page 8 for more information.
- C The definition of the word.
- D Some dictionaries will also include synonyms.
- E What kind of word it is - verb, noun etc.. After verbs you will sometimes see [T], [I], [I,T] - this tells you if the verb is Transitive (it has an object after it), Intransitive (there is no object after it), or it can be both. For example, *increase* is Intransitive - you can't increase something. After nouns, you will see [U], [C], [U,C] - this tells you if the noun is countable, uncountable or if it can be countable or uncountable.
- F Some dictionaries tell you how much people use the word - for example, ★ means we don't use the word very much, but ★★★ means we use it quite a lot.
- G An example sentence to show you how to use the word.

Some of the best dictionaries available are:

Dictionary	Level
Oxford Wordpower Dictionary	A1 - B1
Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary	B1 - C2
Longman Active Study Dictionary	A1 - B1
Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English	B1 - C2
Cambridge Essential English Dictionary	A1 - B1
Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary	B1 - C2

Reference Books

A lot of students also like to use grammar and vocabulary books to study and practice on their own. Some of the best books available are:

Book	Level
Essential Grammar in Use	A1 - A2
English Grammar in Use	B1 - B2
Advanced Grammar in Use	C1 - C2
Grammar for FCE	B1 - B2
Grammar for CAE and CPE	C1 - C2
Grammar for IELTS	Two levels available - Intermediate and Advanced
English Vocabulary in Use	Different levels available from Elementary to Advanced

The Internet and Multimedia

The Internet

There are lots of websites that can help you improve your English - many of the coursebooks we use have their own websites for students (ask your teacher or the Director of Studies).

Here is a list of a few websites you may find useful - and tell your teachers and friends if you find a good website.

<i>BBC Learning English Site</i>	www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/
<i>British Council Learning English Site</i>	https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/
<i>The Oxford Test of English</i> 100% online, available at Approved Test Centres worldwide. Certified by the University of Oxford.	Oxford Test of English
<i>Cambridge English Examinations</i>	www.cambridgeesol.org
<i>IELTS</i>	https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-tests/ielts/
<i>TOEFL</i>	www.ets.org/toefl
<i>OET</i>	https://www.occupationalenglishtest.org/
<i>Cambridge Learners' Dictionary</i>	www.dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/learner-english/
<i>Cambridge Business English Dictionary</i>	www.dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/business-english/
<i>Merriam-Webster Dictionary &</i>	https://www.merriam-webster.com/
<i>Grammar rules, exercises and lessons</i>	www.englishgrammar.org/
<i>Online grammar and spelling proofreader</i>	www.gingersoftware.com/








Coursebook Software

Most of our coursebooks come with online student website and resources. Check the inside of the front cover of your course book or ask your teacher.

Smartphone and Tablet apps

There are a lot of apps available - some are free, but you need to pay for others. Here is a list of some of our favourite apps. Please add a few of your own - and tell your teachers and friends if you find a good app.

All these links are also on our website at www.oxfordschoolofenglish.com/web-links

App	Website	Platform	Free or Paid For?
<i>Oxford University Press Apps</i> <i>Grammar and Vocabulary</i>	Grammar and Vocabulary 	<i>Android</i> <i>Apple</i> <i>Windows</i> <i>Phone</i>	<i>Paid For</i>
<i>Oxford University Press Apps</i> <i>Graded Readers</i>	Graded Readers 	<i>Android</i> <i>Apple</i> <i>Windows</i> <i>Phone</i>	<i>Paid For</i>
<i>Cambridge University Press Apps</i> <i>Including dictionaries, pronunciation, graded readers and coursebooks</i>	English Language Learning 	<i>Android</i> <i>Apple</i> <i>Windows</i> <i>Phone</i>	<i>Paid For</i>
<i>English Grammar in Use</i>	English Grammar in Use 5E 	<i>Android</i> <i>Apple</i> <i>Windows</i>	<i>Paid For</i>
<i>Grammarly - grammar and spelling proofreader</i>	Grammarly 	<i>Android</i> <i>Chrome</i>	<i>Free</i>
<i>Dictionary, Translate, Grammar, Thesaurus, + Plus</i>	Cambridge Dictionary 	<i>Android</i> <i>Apple</i> <i>Windows</i>	<i>Free and Paid For</i>
<i>Say It: Pronunciation from Oxford app iOS App</i>	https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/say-it-pronunciation-from-oxford/id919978521?mt= 	<i>iOS devices</i> <i>iPhone & iPad</i>	<i>Paid for</i>