

ASK AND TELL THE TIME

Knowing how to ask and say the time is something we use every day. We need it to plan our schedule, meet with people, go to class, or catch a bus. In English, there are simple ways to ask and tell the time using just a few words and numbers.

This section will help you ask questions like “What time is it?” and understand answers like “It’s ten o’clock” or “It’s half past two”. Once you learn these basic phrases, you’ll be able to talk about your day with more confidence.

Being able to ask and tell the time helps you be more independent in everyday situations. Whether it’s for catching a bus, arriving to class, or planning with friends, knowing how to talk about time helps you stay organized and respectful of others’ schedules.

How to Ask the Time

There are two main ways to ask the time in English:

- What time is it?
- Do you know what time it is?

Both are correct and polite. If you’re with a friend or classmate, just saying “What time is it?” is perfectly fine.

How to Tell the Time

We usually answer by saying “It’s...” and then the time:

- It’s three o’clock.
- It’s seven thirty.
- It’s half past four.
- It’s a quarter to five.
- It’s ten past six.

You can say the time using numbers only, or include words like:

- o'clock (for exact hour: 1:00, 2:00, etc.)
- past (minutes after the hour)
- to (minutes before the next hour)
- half past (30 minutes)
- quarter past (15 minutes after)
- quarter to (15 minutes before)



For example:

- 2:15 = It's a quarter past two.
- 6:45 = It's a quarter to seven.
- 3:30 = It's half past three.

If that feels too hard, you can also say the numbers directly:

- 3:45 = It's three forty-five.
- 12:20 = It's twelve twenty.

Both ways are correct – the important thing is to understand and be understood.

Talking About Time in Your Day

After you learn how to tell the time, you can use it to describe your routine:

- I wake up at 6:30.
- She goes to school at 7:15.
- We eat lunch at 1:00.
- He sleeps at 10:45.

Notice that we use "at" before the time.

Real Conversation Example

Maya: What time is it?

Leo: It's half past six.

Maya: Oh! I have class at 7:00.

Leo: Don't worry, you still have time.



With just a few simple phrases, they ask, answer, and talk about a plan. You can do the same.

Reference:

Editorial from Woodward English. (s.f.) Telling the time. Woodward English. Recovered from:
https://www.vocabulary.cl/Basic/Telling_Time.htm