

# Home electrical installations

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Anglès tècnic



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## Introduction

This unit, ‘Home electrical installations’, is about home installations, how the power reaches home through the grid and the elements needed to make appliances work and to turn lights on and off. It also deals with safety regulations and includes the “musts” and “don’ts” in the work of an electrician. The aim is to make you get acquainted with specific vocabulary and expressions that you already know in your native language and which are used to discuss electrical terms.

The unit is composed of four different sections. Each of them has a similar structure:

- A text related to one of the above mentioned topics. They are technical texts, usually descriptive.
- A short story about two electricians, who move from one location to the other to install, revise and certify different electrical installations. This section is called “Storyline”, and it starts with the welcoming of Bill, an apprentice from UK. He is in Barcelona to assist Jordi in different works. This section is intended to show the everyday life of an electric technician, with emphasis on job related conversation. The idea is for you to get acquainted to the daily tasks that an electrician does, in English.
- A list of specific vocabulary with terms translated into Catalan in order to help you with the most difficult words that have appeared in the texts and the conversations.
- The grammar section, with the explanation of different grammar points and a great deal of examples that should help you understand the mechanics of the language.

In the section ‘Home Electrical Installations’ there is a text with a description of how electricity reaches homes and it is distributed by the elements that compose a consumer unit. It also deals with European safety regulations. The section ‘Electrical Supply Circuits’ is about how miniature circuits work. You will see a list of symbols used to represent switches, socket outlets, and other electrical elements. In the last section, ‘Hazards and safety’ you will see a list of safety issues with regards to electricity installations.

The *grammar* sections introduce three other basic aspects. In section one, you will learn about the different present and past tenses, which are obviously used to speak about the present and the past, respectively. You will see the forms of the verbs and the difference in use between the present simple and continuous, and between the past simple, the past continuous and the present perfect. There is also a reference to the adverbials of time which are normally associated to the present and past tenses. The second section is devoted to explain the adjectives, which are

the words used to describe the material world around us and our emotions. There is a special section to introduce the comparative adjectives and adverbs. We use these forms to make comparisons. The third section introduces the prepositions of place and time, which tell us where and when something happens. We'll learn to distinguish their uses, with specific sections devoted to explain the date formats in English and the way of asking and telling the time.

The *everyday language* sections introduce other examples of this type of language. In the first part of the unit, you will learn the different questions and answers to ask for and give basic personal information, like your name, your age, your address, etc. This type of information is normally included in a friendly conversation with a colleague, or in a more formal situation, it may be part of a job interview. Next, you will see some words and expressions frequently used in telephone conversations. Telephone conversations are very common situations in our daily and working lives, and they require the use of the oral skills and some very specific language. Finally, you will also learn about the ways of giving advice. You give advice when you recommend an action to other people, and for this there are different ways which you can use in different contexts. The emphasis is on the grammatical structures used with each word and expression.

## Learning objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. Understand oral messages in standard language both in daily life situations and in the professional field of the electrical installations as well as analyze the general meaning of a message and relate it to the corresponding language resources.

- Arrange the elements that make up a message.
- Identify the main idea in a message.
- Be conscious of the importance of understanding the main ideas in a message even if you do not understand all the elements that compose the message.
- Get specific information in messages about usual aspects of the everyday and professional life.
- Identify the main ideas in a well-structured speech in standard language about well-known aspects and transmitted in the media.

2. Understand simple written texts related to the field of electrical installations and analyze the contents comprehensively.

- Choose reference material and technical dictionaries.
- Read simple texts in standard language.
- Translate a text in standard language by using reference materials, if necessary.
- Interpret the general meaning of a message.
- Relate the text to its corresponding context.
- Identify the terminology used in a message.
- Interpret technical manuals.

3. Produce clear, well-organized oral messages frequently used in companies of the field of electrical installations and take an active part in professional conversations.

- Express the tasks which you have to carry out in your job.
- Communicate by using formulas, connectors and strategies used in the interaction with other people.

- Describe and arrange a task in a sequence.

4. Write simple texts in standard language as normally used in the field of electrical installations and use the appropriate resources for each situation.

- Write short texts referring to everyday and/or professional aspects.
- Summarize texts related to your job.
- Organize the information in a coherent way.
- Apply the appropriate rules and specific vocabulary when filling in documents.

5. Show the appropriate attitude and behaviour in communicative situations as established by international conventions

- Define the most distinctive aspects of the customs of English-speaking communities.
- Describe the social conventions of your country.
- Identify the values and beliefs which are characteristic of English-speaking communities.
- Identify the social and professional aspects of your job in all types of oral and written messages.
- Apply the social conventions in English-speaking communities.

## 1. Security and control elements

The electric current comes from the power station through the public grid, gets to the supply point and then into the house through the connection point.

Once into the house, we can see the meter, which is usually found on the ground floor of the building. It measures the electrical energy consumed by the household in kilowatt-hours (kWh).

From the meter, three wires get into the house. They have colour codes which are used to distinguish **phase** (line), **neutral** and **ground** (earth) wires. Line wires are black, brown or grey. Neutral wires are blue, and the ground wires are yellow and green.

The interior electrical network is made up of the consumer unit, electrical supply circuits, ground connection and electrical receivers.

Located near the entrance of the house, there is the **consumer unit** (also called distribution board or breaker panel), which is a set of elements used to ensure the safety, protection and control of the interior electrical system. It contains the following elements:

- **Main electrical circuit breaker MSB (ICPM):** General circuit breaker for the interior electrical system. It protects against excessive currents and short circuits, and prevents power consumption from exceeding that which has been contracted.
- **Automatic Main Switch AMS (IGA).** It protects an installation against high intensities and shortcuts.
- **Residual-current device RCD (ID).** It detects leaks of current in the system, protecting users from possible electrical discharges.
- **Miniature Circuit Breaker MCB (PIA):** protect all of the circuits from excessive currents and short circuits. There are as many miniature circuit breakers as there are circuits in the electrical system.

The most common electric circuits at home are:

- Single point light: lamps that can be turned on with a single switch.
- Commuted point light: lamps that can be turned on from two or more points.
- Grounded or ungrounded electrical outlets.

## Safety regulations

The electrical installation of a house is done according to different safety regulations. The International Standard series governing electrical installations is IEC 60364. The European equivalent is CENELEC HD384. There are national equivalents in all European countries (AREI/RGIE - B, VDE100 - D, REBT - ES, NF C 15-100 - F, CEI 64-8 - I, NN 1010 - NL, BS 7671 - UK). There are, however, significant differences between national and international standards' implementation. In Spain, the execution of the electric installations are subject to the Electro Technical Regulation on Low Voltage (REBT) that includes the technical instructions (ITC).

The IP Code, International Protection Marking, IEC standard 60529, sometimes interpreted as Ingress Protection Marking, classifies and rates the degree of protection provided against intrusion (body parts such as hands and fingers), dust, accidental contact, and water by mechanical casings and electrical enclosures. It is published by the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC).

### Storyline

Jordi and Bill are on their way to commission an electrical installation in a new home. Jordi wants to introduce Bill to all the devices in the home, such as switches, sockets, meters and light fittings. He also wants to instruct him about the standard wiring and safety procedures. They ring the bell and Mr White opens the door.

**Jordi:** Hello, we're electric technicians. We're here for your electrical connection.

**Mr White:** Oh! You're welcome. Come in.

**Jordi:** Can you show us where the consumer unit is?

**Mr White:** Do you mean the circuit breaker panel?

**Jordi:** Certainly. We need to check if your wiring complies with the regulations before we can go ahead with the installation of the electrical meter and the connection to the grid.

**Bill:** Jordi, do I bring the toolbox from the van?

**Jordi:** Ok. We will start the testing as soon as you are back.

**Bill:** Where do we start the testing?

**Jordi:** First of all we have to check the circuit breaker ratings for the kitchen, bathroom, the socket in the general house and the lighting points.

**Bill:** Do I note down the Ampers of each of them?

**Jordi:** Yes. Now, we'll go ahead to install the electrical meter.

**Bill:** What do we need for the installation? And where do we mount the meter?

**Jordi:** It's easy. There is already an existing conduit pipe, so we just need to run a wire from the circuit breaker to where we'll mount the meter.

## 1.1 Vocabulary

- **Power station:** central elèctrica
- **Public grid:** la xarxa elèctrica pública
- **Supply point:** escomesa
- **Meter:** comptador
- **Phase:** fase (cable)
- **Ground wire:** cable de connexió a terra
- **Electrical network:** xarxa elèctrica
- **Consumer unit:** Quadre general de control i protecció
- **Main electrical circuit breaker:** Interruptor de control de potència màxima (ICPM)
- **Short circuit:** curtcircuit
- **Automatic Main Switch:** Interruptor general automàtic (IGA)
- **Residual-current device:** diferencial
- **Miniature Circuit Breaker:** petits interruptors automàtics (PIA)
- **Single point light:** punt de llum
- **Grounded electrical outlet:** presa de corrent amb connexió a terra
- **Safety regulations:** normativa de seguretat
- **REBT (Reglament Electrotècnic de Baixa Tensió):** Electro Technical Regulation on Low Voltage.
- **Commission:** donar d'alta (un servei)
- **Device:** dispositiu
- **Light fitting:** làmpada
- **Wiring:** cablejat
- **Complies with the regulations:** compleix amb la normativa
- **Go ahead:** procedir, tirar endavant (amb una feina)
- **The grid:** la xarxa
- **Toolbox:** caixa d'eines
- **As soon as:** tan aviat com
- **Conduit pipe:** conducte

### 1.1.1 Grammar

To express the past, there are several verb tenses in English. Two of these tenses are the *past simple* and the *past continuous*. The basic difference between these two tenses is that the past simple is used to express finished actions whereas the past continuous is used to express actions that were taking place at a specific moment in the past.

On the other hand, the prepositions of time are those that introduce a prepositional phrase of time. In other words, the prepositions of time tell us when an action happens.

#### The past simple and the past continuous

Here are the forms and uses of the past simple and the past continuous tenses.

#### The past simple

When we need to use the past simple form of a verb, we must know whether the verb is *regular* or *irregular*.

- In *regular verbs*, the affirmative form of the past simple adds the ending *-ed* to the infinitive (*work > worked*).
- In *irregular verbs*, the affirmative form of the past simple is a different word from the infinitive (*go > went*).

See annex 'List of irregular verbs' to see the most common irregular verbs in English.

There are no rules to know which verbs are regular and which are irregular. We must know the most common irregular verbs.

These are the forms of the past simple of a regular verb (*work*):

TAULA 1.1. Conjugation of the past simple (regular verb: //work//)

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did I work...?
You	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did you work...?
He/She/It	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did he work...?
We	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did we work...?
You	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did you work...?
They	worked	did not work	didn't work	Did they work...?

Here are the forms of an irregular verb (*go*):

**TAULA 1.2.** Conjugation of the past simple (irregular verb: //go//)

	<b>Affirmative</b>	<b>Negative Long form</b>	<b>Negative Short form</b>	<b>Interrogative</b>
I	went	did not go	didn't go	Did I go...?
You	went	did not go	didn't go	Did you go...?
He/She/It	went	did not go	didn't go	Did he go...?
We	went	did not go	didn't go	Did we go...?
You	went	did not go	didn't go	Did you go...?
They	went	did not go	didn't go	Did they go...?

The past simple is used:

1) To express finished actions or states in the past:

- I *worked* in a factory 20 years ago (Cat. Fa 20 anys *vaig treballar* a una fàbrica).
- *Did you watch* the film on TV last night? (Cat. *Vas veure* la pel·lícula de la tele ahir a la nit?).
- Mr Green *didn't come* in his office yesterday. (Cat. Ahir Mr Green *no va venir* al seu despatx).
- Marcia *met* her husband at a party when they were both 15 (Cat. La Marcia *va conèixer* el seu marit a una festa quan tots dos tenien 15 anys).
- It *was* very hot last summer, do you remember? (L'estiu passat *va fer* molta calor, te'n recordes?).
- We *felt happy* when he *left* (Cat. *Ens vam alegrar* quan ell *va marxar*).

## The past continuous

Here are the forms of the past continuous:

**TAULA 1.3.** Conjugation of the past continuous (//work//)

	<b>Affirmative</b>	<b>Negative Long form</b>	<b>Negative Short form</b>	<b>Interrogative</b>
I	was working	was not working	wasn't working	was I working...?
you	were working	were not working	weren't working	were you working...?
he/she/it	was working	was not working	wasn't working	was he working...?
we	were working	were not working	weren't working	were we working...?
you	were working	were not working	weren't working	were you working...?
they	were working	were not working	weren't working	were they working...?

Notes:

- As in the present continuous, the past continuous is composed of two elements: the auxiliary verb *be* (conjugated in the past) + the gerund.
- In the past continuous, we only conjugate the verb *be*. For this reason, there is no difference between regular and irregular verbs (for example: *I was working, I was going*).
- The verb *be* is an irregular verb (*be > was/were*).

We can translate the *past continuous* into Catalan and Spanish in two ways: *I was working* (Cat. *estava treballant/treballava*; Sp. *estaba trabajando/trabajaba*).

We use the past continuous:

1) To express actions that were taking place at a specific moment in the past. At that moment, the action was not finished yet.

- *I was sleeping* at eleven last night. (Cat. *Ahir a les onze de la nit jo dormia/estava dormint*).
- What *were you doing* at this time yesterday? (Cat. *Què feies/estaves fent ahir a aquesta hora?*).
- *I wasn't doing* anything (Cat. *No feia/estava fent res*).

2) To express simultaneous actions in the past (with the connector *while* [Cat. *mentre*]).

- While *I was doing* all the work, he *was talking* on the phone with his friend (Cat. *Mentre jo estava fent tota la feina, ell estava parlant per telèfon amb el seu amic*).
- They *were flying* to Paris while *I was waiting* for them in the office (Cat. *Els estaven volant a París mentre jo els estava esperant a l'oficina*).

We very often use the past continuous in combination with the past simple to express an action that was taking place in the past (in past continuous) when another action took place in that moment (in the past simple). For example:

- *I met* Mr White when *I was going out* of the building (Cat. *Em vaig trobar el Sr White quan jo sortia de l'edifici*).
- *We were walking down* the street when the tree *fell down* (Cat. *Estàvem caminant pel carrer quan l'arbre va caure*).

See Unit 1 section 2 Grammar: The present simple and the present continuous for a list of verbs that do not take the continuous forms.

### **Adverbs and adverbials of time generally associated to the past tenses**

Some of the adverbs and time expressions that we can use with the past tenses are:

- Yesterday (Cat. ahir)
- The day before yesterday (Cat. abans d'ahir)
- Last week/month/year, etc. (Cat. la setmana passada, el mes passat, l'any passat, etc.)
- In the past (Cat. en el passat)
- Before (Cat. abans)
- In the old times (Cat. en els vells temps)
- When I was younger (Cat. quan jo era més jove)
- In that moment (Cat. En aquell moment)
- (One year) ago (Cat. Fa [un any])
- Then (Cat. aleshores, en aquell moment)

We generally say these adverbs and adverbials at the end of the sentence, but we can also place them at the beginning to emphasize the idea. For example:

- We met him at the airport *yesterday*.
- *Yesterday* we met him at the airport.

### **Prepositions of time (I)**

The three basic prepositions of time are: *in*, *on* and *at*. As you can see, they have the same form as the prepositions of place. The prepositions of time indicate when something happens. They are equivalent to the Catalan 'a'/'en' or the Spanish 'en', but in English they are used in different contexts. To use the prepositions of time correctly, we must learn the prepositional phrase (that is, the preposition + the noun).

Here are the basic uses of the prepositions of time:

#### **In**

1) With years, centuries and historical periods:

- *In 2010*
- *In the 19th century*
- *In the Middle Ages*
- *In modern times*

- *In the present*
- *In the past*
- *In the future*

2) With the names of the months and seasons of the year:

- *In April*
- *In September*
- *In Winter*
- *In Summer*

3) With the parts of the day:

- *In the morning*
- *In the afternoon*
- *In the evening*
- *In the night*

4) With a period of time, to indicate when something will happen in the future:

- *In a moment*
- *In five minutes*
- *In one week*
- *In three years*

## **On**

1) With the days of the week:

- *On Monday*
- *On Tuesday*
- *On Sunday*
- *On Fridays*
- *On weekdays*

2) With dates and nouns denoting specific dates:

- *On 16th June*

- *On 4th November, 2005*
- *On the 23rd*
- *On Christmas Day*
- *On New Year's Eve*

## **At**

1) With clock times and nouns denoting clock times:

- *At 6 o'clock*
- *At a quarter past eight*
- *At 2 pm*
- *At midnight*
- *At midday*
- *At sunset*
- *At dawn*
- *At night*

2) With names of holidays and with the noun 'weekend':

- *At Christmas*
- *At Easter*
- *At the New Year*
- *At the weekend*

### Some differences between the prepositions of time

#### At/On

1) **At** is used to speak about holidays and weekends in general:

- *We usually stay at home at Christmas* (Cat. Normalment ens quedem a casa per Nadal)

2) **On** is used to speak about a special day or weekend:

- *We usually stay at home on Christmas Day* (Cat. Normalment ens quedem a casa el dia de Nadal)
- *The meeting took place on the last weekend of June* (Cat. La reunió va tenir lloc el darrer cap de setmana de juny)

#### In/On

1) **In** is used to speak about parts of the day:

- *I work in the morning* (Cat. Treballo pel matí)

2) **On** is used to speak about a part of the day in particular:

- *I arrived on the morning of the ninth of November* (Cat. Vaig arribar el matí del nou de novembre)
- *It happened on a cold winter morning* (Cat. Va passar un fred matí d'hivern)

#### At/In

1) **At** is used to speak about any night in general:

- *I don't like working at night* (Cat. No m'agrada treballar de nit)

2) **In** is used to speak about one particular night:

- *I met him in the night of the tenth* (Cat. El vaig conèixer la nit del dia 10)
- *I couldn't sleep in the night because I was very nervous* (Cat. No vaig poder dormir per la nit perquè estava molt nerviosa)

## 1.1.2 Communication

Speaking on the phone is a very common activity, both in a working environment and in our daily life. We may do so with customers, colleagues or friends, but in all the cases speaking on the phone requires the use of specific words and expressions. A clear pronunciation is very important when speaking on the phone, so it is a good idea to practise the expressions carefully before attempting to make a call or answering the phone. It is also necessary to have good listening skills because in a telephone conversation you cannot see the other person and therefore you will not have the help of the body language.

It is also very common to speak about dates and clock times. We may need to write dates in formal business letters or we may need to say dates and clock times in our daily conversations. In the particular case of the dates, there is a great difference between the written and the spoken forms. Clock times are mostly used in speech.

### Speaking on the phone

Here are some common expressions used in telephone conversations. They are divided in categories according to their purpose and they all include an equivalent expression in Catalan.

#### Answering the telephone

- *Hello?* (Cat. Digui?)
- *Commercial Department, hello?* (Cat. Departament comercial, digui?)
- *Joan Alsina speaking* (Cat. Joan Alsina, diguim?)
- *Customer service, can I help you?* (Cat. Servei al client, en què el puc ajudar?)

#### Asking for the other person's identification

- *Who's calling?* (Cat. Qui és?, de part de qui?, qui el truca?)
- *Where are you calling from?* (Cat. D'on truca?)
- *May I have your name please* (formal) (Cat. Em pot dir el seu nom si us plau?)
- *Is that Mr Peter Bramwell?* (Cat. Parlo amb el Sr. Peter Bramwell?)
- *Is that the Commercial Department?* (Cat. És el departament comercial?)

#### Identifying yourself

- *This is Joan Alsina* (Cat. Sóc Joan Alsina)
- *My name's Joan Alsina* (Cat. Em dic Joan Alsina)
- *I'm calling from Zara* (Cat. Truco de Zara)

#### Asking to speak to someone

- *Can I speak to Mr Peter Bramwell please?* (Cat. Puc parlar amb el Sr. Peter Bramwell si us plau?)
- *May I speak to Mr Peter Bramwell please?* (formal) (Cat. Podria parlar amb el Sr. Peter Bramwell si us plau?)

- *Is Mr Peter Bramwell there?* (Cat. Està el Sr. Peter Bramwell?)
- *I'd like to speak to Mr Peter Bramwell* (Cat. Voldria parlar amb el Sr. Peter Bramwell)
- *Could you put me through to Mr Peter Bramwell?* (Cat. Em podria passar amb el Sr. Peter Bramwell?)

If Mr Peter Bramwell answers the phone himself, the answer could be:

- *Speaking!* (Cat. El mateix, sóc jo mateix)

If someone else answers the phone, see below:

#### **Asking the other person to wait**

- *One moment please* (Cat. Un moment si us plau)
- *Hold on please* (Cat. No pengi si us plau)
- *Just a minute* (Cat. Un minut)

#### **Connecting with other people**

- *I'll put you through* (Cat. Li passo)
- *I'l put you through to Mr Bramwell* (Cat. Li passo al Sr. Bramwell)
- *I'll put you through to his office* (Cat. Li passo al seu despatx)

#### **Explaining that the other person is not available**

- *I'm afraid Mr Bramwell is not in his office right now* (Cat. Em temo que el Sr. Bramwell no és al seu despatx en aquest moment)
- *Mr Bramwell is in a meeting at the moment* (Cat. El Sr. Bramwell és a una reunió en aquest moment)
- *I'm afraid the line's busy at the moment* (Cat. Està comunicant)

#### **Asking about the reason of the call**

- *What does it concern?* (formal) (Cat. De què es tracta)
- *What's it about?* (Cat. Sobre què és?)

#### **Offering solutions**

- *Can you call back later?* (Cat. Pots trucar més tard?)

- *Could you call back later?* (formal) (Cat. Pot trucar més tard?)
- *Could I take a message?* (Cat. Vol que li doni algun missatge?)
- *Would you like to leave a message?* (Cat. Vold deixar-li algun missatge?)
- *Can I help you in anything?* (Cat. El puc ajudar en alguna cosa?)
- *Ok, I'll call back later, thanks* (Cat. D'acord, trucaré més tard)
- *I'll try again, thanks* (Cat. Ho tornaré a intentar, gràcies)

### Leaving a message

- *Could I leave a message please?* (Cat. Puc deixar un missatge si us plau?)
- *I'd like to leave a message for Mr Bramwell* (Cat. Voldria deixar un missatge pel Sr. Bramwell)
- *Could you please tell Mr Bramwell that Joan Alsina called?* (Cat. Li pot dir al Sr. Bramwell que l'ha trucat Joan Alsina si us plau?)
- *Please tell Mr Bramwell that...* (Cat. Si us plau, digui al Sr Bramwell que...)

### Explaining the reason of the call

- *I'm calling on behalf of Inés Fernández* (Cat. Truco de part de la Inés Fernández)
- *I'm calling about...* (Cat. Truco en relació a...)
- *I'm calling to...* (Cat. Truco per a...)

### Saying goodbye

- *Well, thanks for your help* (Cat. Bé, gràcies per la teva ajuda)
- *I'll call you back in a few days* (Cat. Et truco d'aquí uns dies)
- *Goodbye* (Cat. Adéu)
- *Bye* (Cat. Adéu)

### Leaving recorded messages

Sometimes we may need to leave a recorded message in an answering machine (Cat. contestador automàtic) or in a voicemail (Cat. bústia de veu). These messages must be as short as possible and they should include at least the following information:

1. The person to whom we address the message.
2. Our name.
3. The message.
4. Closing expressions.

Here are two examples of recorded messages:

- *Hello. This is a message for Mr Peter Bramwell. This is Joan Alsina from Zara. I'm calling about an order for 30 male shirts we made two weeks ago. We are still expecting the shirts. Could you please call me back and tell me if there's any problem with the order? Thank you. Bye!*
- *Hi. This message is for Eric Smith. I'm calling from a hospital in Barcelona. I'm sorry to inform you that your mother had an accident the other day. It's not serious, but you should come as soon as possible. Could you please call me back at this number? Thanks, bye!*

### Expressing dates and clock times

There is a great difference in the way we write and say dates and clock times. In addition there is also a difference between British English and American English.

#### Dates

The table shows different ways of writing a date in British English and American English:

**TAULA 1.4.** Writing dates in British and American English

British English	American English
9th June, 2007	June 9th, 2007
9 June 2007	June 9, 2007
9/6/2007	6/9/2007
9/6/07	6/9/07
09/06/07	06/09/07

When writing or interpreting a written date, we must be aware of the variety of English. Notice the following:

- For a British person, 9/6/2007 is 9th June 2007; for an American person, it is: 6th September 2007.
- For a British person, 6/9/2007 is 6th September 2007; for an American person, it is: 9th June 2007.

Independently of the format, we must say the dates like this:

- British English: *the ninth of June two thousand and seven*
- American English: *June (the) ninth two thousand and seven*

See unit 1, section 3 for detailed information about the expression of numbers in English.

When we say a date, we must use the ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, etc.). In American English, we can eliminate the article *the*.

### Saying the years in English

Both in British and American English, we can say the years like this:

- 1800: eighteen hundred
- 1906: nineteen hundred and six / nineteen oh six
- 1998: nineteen ninety eight
- 2000: two thousand / twenty hundred
- 2007: two thousand and seven / twenty oh seven
- 2018: two thousand and eighteen / twenty eighteen

Here are some time expressions with dates:

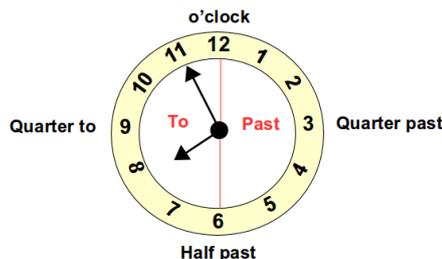
- *When did you arrive?* (Cat. quan vas arribar?)
- *I arrived in June* (Cat. Vaig arribar el mes de juny)
- *I arrived in 2007* (Cat. Vaig arribar l'any 2007)
- *I arrived on 9th June 2007* (Cat. Vaig arribar el 9 de juny de 2007)
- *I arrived on the 9th* (Cat. Vaig arribar el dia 9)
- *What's the date today?* (Cat. A quina data estem avui?)
- *It's 9th June* (Cat. És el 9 de juny)

Notice that we use the preposition *in* with months and years and the preposition *on* with complete dates or expressions denoting dates.

### Clock times

The figure shows the basic words that we need to tell the time:

FIGURA 1.1. Clock times



Here are some examples of clock times in English:

TAULA 1.5. The clock times in English

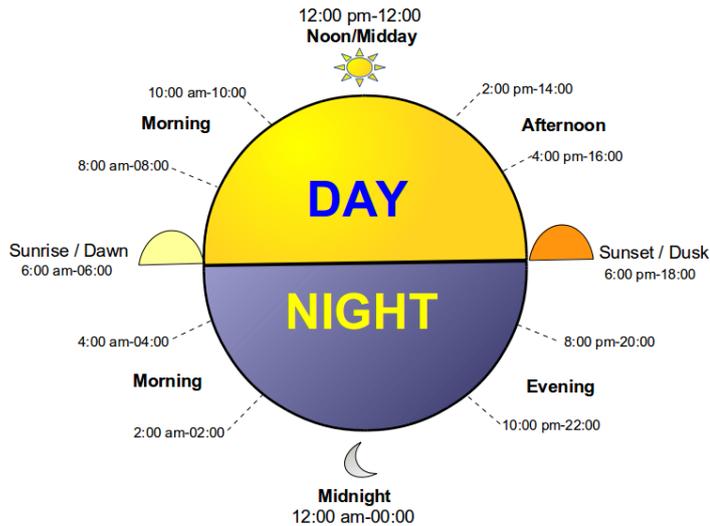
Time	In timetables	Normal use
3:00	three (o'clock)	
3:05	three oh five	five past three
3:12	three twelve	twelve minutes past three
3:15	three fifteen	a quarter past three
3:30	three thirty	half past three
3:40	three forty	twenty to four
3:45	three forty-five	a quarter to four
3:56	three fifty-six	four minutes to four
4:00	four (o'clock)	

Note the following:

- We use the word *o'clock* (Cat. en punt) only on the hour: *three o'clock*.
- For all the times between the hour and the half hour, we use the adverb *past*; for all the times between the half hour and the next hour, we use the adverb *to*.
- We must always use the word *quarter* (*quarter past* or *quarter to*). It is wrong to say: *fifteen past* or *fifteen to*.
- The half hour is expressed with *half past* and the previous hour.
- With the multiples of five, we say: *ten past three*. With all the others, we must say the word *minutes*: *twelve minutes past three*

The figure shows the parts of the day and the times included in each one.

FIGURA 1.2. Parts of the day



Here are some expressions related to clock times. They are placed in a sentence:

- *What time is it?, what's the time* (Cat. Quina hora és?)
- *It's a quarter past four* (Cat. És un quart de cinc/Són les quatre i quart)
- *It's half past seven* (Cat. Són dos quarts de set/Són les sis i mitja)
- *What time will you come?* (Cat. A quina hora vindràs?)
- *I'll come at ten* (Cat. Vindré a les deu)
- *It's three in the morning* (Cat. Són les tres de la matinada)

With clock times we use the preposition *at*, but notice that we do not use it in the question. It is wrong to say: *at what time...?* With parts of the day, we must use the preposition *in*.

Other expressions related to clock times are:

- *At noon / At midday* (Cat. Al migdia)
- *At sunset / At dusk* (Cat. A la posta del sol)
- *At midnight* (Cat. A mitjanit)
- *At sunrise / At dusk* (Cat. A la sortida del sol)

**The 12-hour-system**

In English, it is not common to use the 24-hour-system. Instead, they use the 12-hour-system. To distinguish between the morning and the evening, they add:

- *am* (Latin: *ante meridiem*), meaning *in the morning*
- *pm* (Latin: *post meridiem*), meaning *in the afternoon* or *in the evening*

For example, 15:00h is *three pm* or *three in the afternoon* and 03:00h is *three am* or *three in the morning*.

## 1.2 Writing a summary

We write a summary to explain the main ideas of a text in a few sentences.

When writing a summary, we should remember the following:

- Only include the most important information.
- Do not include information that is not important, as for example, details, direct speech, examples to illustrate the ideas, etc.
- Do not express your own opinion or add information that is not in the text.

As in everything else, writing a good summary requires some practice. Here are some ideas to help you:

- First of all, read the text to get a general idea of its contents.
- Read the text again and underline the three or four most important ideas.
- Without looking at the text again, write a few sentences about the text from memory. Try to use alternative words.
- Read the text again and check your summary. Make sure that you have included all the important information and that you have not copied from the text.
- If you think that the summary is too long, cut out the unnecessary details.

Here is some useful language that you can use in your summaries:

- *Connectors to express contrast:* In spite of, despite, although, however.
- *Connectors to add information:* In addition, also, too.
- *Connectors to express reason and result:* This is so because, because, so, therefore.
- *Relative clauses:* The film, *which* is about a safari, shows that... The statement *that* he gave in March is no longer true.

Here is an example of a summary.

### **Text**

#### *The Island*

In recent years, we have seen significant developments in cloning. Sheep, cows, cats and, more recently, dogs that have been cloned in the name of scientific progress. One of the potential uses of cloning is to 'grow' replacement organs in human clones for people who are ill. It is this subject that is portrayed in a new film released this week in the USA called 'The Island'.

The film features Ewan McGregor and Scarlett Johansson and it raises awareness of this highly controversial moral issue. However, in spite of excellent performances from both main actors and spectacular special effects, the film received a disappointing reaction from American audiences. It is possible that the subject is too difficult and that some audiences prefer thrillers without the moral dilemmas. The film opens in the UK next week and it will be interesting to see how the British audiences react.

**Summary**

The new film 'The Island', which deals with the controversial subject of cloning people, has not been received well in the USA. Although the acting and effects are very good, some audiences may have been disappointed by the moral message of the film.

## 2. Electrical installations

Electricity is a very important element in a house. Lights, appliances, television, HVAC systems and security alarms all run on electricity. Electricity is distributed throughout the house by means of circuits that connect the miniature circuit breakers to the various receivers. These circuits are made up of conductors (wires), control devices such as switches and buttons, conduits (control device boxes), and connection devices such as plugs, sockets, extension sockets, lamp sockets, etc.

At various points in the circuit, there are switches that allow, for example, to turn on and off the lights in a room. A switch is an electric component that interrupts the current (or flow of electricity). It generally consists of a mechanical device set on the wall. The electricity can be transferred to the different devices by means of a socket. A socket is usually mounted on the wall and has two or three holes called female contacts. The plug is a connector composed of protruding prongs or male contacts. The plug is attached to a cable, so when you plug in an electric device, the electricity is transferred through the cable to give power to the device. Most devices have a switch to stop the power supply, so it is not necessary to unplug every time we want to turn it off.

The electric plugs and sockets might be different in other countries. The differences are related to voltage, shape and types of connectors and are the consequence of the lack of an international standard.

A house electrical plan is needed in order to do the electrical installation. There are many electrical symbols used to represent the different elements.

### Storyline

A building constructor hired Bill and Jordi for the electrical wiring and layout of a house under construction. The constructor handed over to them an approved electric installation plan.

**Jordi:** Let's have a look at the plan. Bill, you will interpret it.

**Bill:** We need one circuit for lightings supplying a maximum of 10 lighting points.

**Jordi:** Ok.

**Bill:** We also need at least one circuit for each appliance such as a water heater, a washing machine, dishwasher, electric cooker, fridge, etc. rated with a 10/16 Amps each.

**Jordi:** Can you explain exactly what is needed in each of the rooms?

**Bill:** Ok. For the living room, we need a minimum of two fix lighting points, one in the middle of the room and another one next to the dining area. And five socket-outlets. There should be one at the entrance, three on the wall for the television and other gadgets, and one beside the sofa.

**Jordi:** What about the kitchen?

**Bill:** For the kitchen we need two fixed lighting points and five socket outlets: for the fridge, the washing machine, the dishwasher, the microwave, and a spare double socket for other

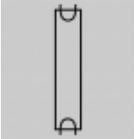
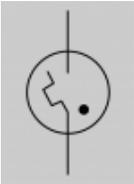
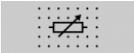
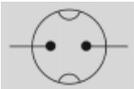
appliances. In the bathroom we need two fix lighting points: one up, on the ceiling, and one on the wall above the mirror. And one double socket on the wall, beside the mirror for the shaver or the hair-drier. And finally, the bedroom. We need one fix lighting point on the ceiling, two socket-outlets beside the bed, and we will also need an intermediate switch to turn the light on and off from the bed and at the entrance.

**Jordi:** Well done, Bill! Now, with all this we will prepare a quotation and send it to the contractor.

## 2.1 Vocabulary

- **Appliance:** aparell (electrodomèstic)
- **HVAC systems (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning):** sistemes CVAC (Calefacció, Ventilació, i Aire Condicionat)
- **Are made up of:** estan fets de
- **Control device:** dispositiu de control
- **Plug:** connector
- **Socket:** endoll
- **Extension socket:** regleta d'endolls
- **Unplug:** desendollar
- **Wiring:** cablejat
- **Layout:** distribució, disposició
- **Lightning point:** punt de llum
- **Water heater:** escalfador
- **Washing machine:** rentadora
- **Dishwasher:** rentaplats
- **Electric cooker:** encimera
- **Socket-outlet:** endoll

**TAULA 2.1.** Some electric symbols

Símbol	Significat
	Lamp/light bulb. General and multifilar symbol
	Lamp/light bulb. Singlewired symbol
	Fluorescent. Multiwired symbol
	Fluorescent. Singlewired symbol
	Choke
	Electric bell
	Resistor
	Variable resistor/Rheostat (IEC)
	Capacitor
	Polarized capacitor
	Inductor
	Magnetic Core Inductor
	Iron Core Inductor
	Socket outlet (power) with protective contact. Multifilar symbol
	Socket outlet (power) with protective contact. Unifilar symbol
	Switch contact closure or work generic symbol. Multifilar symbol
	Switch opening or resting. Multiwired symbol

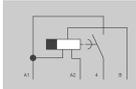
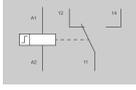
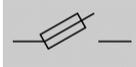
.....

**TAULA 2.1** (continuació)

Símbol	Significat
	Switch. Normally open. Multiwired symbol
	Switch, single pole. Singlewired symbol
	Circuit switch. Contact cutting before making contact. Multifilar symbol
	Two position switch unipolar. Multifilar symbol
	Two position switch unipolar. Unifilar symbol
	Changeover switch or Intermediate switch. Multifilar symbol
	Changeover switch or Intermediate switch. Unifilar symbol
	Push button switch. Normally open. Multifilar symbol
	Push button. Singlewired symbol
	Changeover switch. Multiwired symbol
	Changeover switch. Singlewired symbol

.....

**TAULA 2.1** (continuació)

Símbol	Significat
	Staircase relay. Multiwired symbol
	Staircase relay. Singlewired symbol
	Teleruptor. Multiwired symbol
	Teleruptor. Singlewired symbol
	Fuse
	Switch with built-in fuse

### 2.1.1 Grammar

The *present perfect* is a verb tense which is used to speak about the past, but, unlike the *past simple* and the *past continuous*, the actions in the present perfect have strong connections with the present.

Apart from the basic prepositions *in*, *on* and *at*, there are other prepositions which are used to speak about time, as for example, *for*, *since*, *before*, *after*, etc.

Finally the *passive voice* (Cat. *veu passiva*) is a special form of the verb which is sometimes used instead of the ‘normal’ *active voice* (Cat. *veu activa*). The passive voice is more widely used in English than in Catalan and Spanish, especially in written texts, so it is necessary to learn its forms and uses.

#### The present perfect simple and the present perfect continuous

The present perfect tenses are composed of two elements: the auxiliary verb *have* and the past participle form of the verb. As with the past simple, when we need to use the past participle in English we must know whether the verb is *regular* or *irregular*

- In *regular verbs*, the past participle form adds the ending *-ed* to the infinitive (*work > worked*).
- In *irregular verbs*, the past participle form is a different word from the infinitive (*go > gone*).

#### The present perfect simple

These are the forms of the present perfect simple of a regular verb (*worked*).

TAULA 2.2. Conjugation of the present perfect simple (regular verb: //work//)

	Affirmative Long form	Affirmative Short form	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	have worked	've worked	have not worked	haven't worked	Have I worked...?
You	have worked	've worked	have not worked	haven't worked	Have you worked...?
He/She/It	has worked	's worked	has not worked	hasn't worked	Has he worked...?
We	have worked	've worked	have not worked	haven't worked	Have we worked...?
You	have worked	've worked	have not worked	haven't worked	Have you worked...?
They	have worked	've worked	have not worked	haven't worked	Have they worked...?

Here are the forms of the present perfect simple of an irregular verb (*go*).

The past participle is an invariable form of the verb. It is used (with the auxiliary verb *have*) to form the perfect tenses of the verbs and (with the auxiliary verb *be*) to form the passive voice.

**TAULA 2.3.** Conjugation of the present perfect simple (irregular verb: //go//)

	<b>Affirmative Long form</b>	<b>Affirmative Short form</b>	<b>Negative Long form</b>	<b>Negative Short form</b>	<b>Interrogative</b>
I	have gone	've gone	have not gone	haven't gone	Have I gone...?
You	have gone	've gone	have not gone	haven't gone	Have you gone...?
He/She/It	has gone	's gone	has not gone	hasn't gone	Has he gone...?
We	have gone	've gone	have not gone	haven't gone	Have we gone...?
You	have gone	've gone	have not gone	haven't gone	Have you gone...?
They	have gone	've gone	have not gone	haven't gone	Have they gone...?

The present perfect simple is used:

1) To express an action that started in the past that continues in the present (usually with the prepositions *for* or *since*):

- I *have worked* in this company for 20 years (Cat. Porto 20 anys treballant en aquesta empresa)
- He *has been* a firefighter since 1998 (Cat. És bomber des del 1998)

In these two examples, we understand that I still work in this company and that he is still a firefighter. If we use *for* or *since*, the actions are not finished.

2) To express a recently finished action whose consequences still continue in the present:

- The street is wet because it *has rained* all night (Cat. El carrer està mullat perquè *ha plogut* tota la nit)
- He is in hospital because he *has had* an accident at home (Cat. És a l'hospital perquè *ha tingut* un accident domèstic)

3) To express a finished action in an indeterminate past, usually to speak about experiences and accomplishments:

- I *have been* to Canada many times (Cat. *He estat* al Canadà moltes vegades)
- *Have you ever worked* in a foreign country? (Cat. *Has treballat* alguna vegada a l'estranger?)

### Adverbials of time commonly used with the present perfect simple

These are some time adverbials that we often use with the present perfect simple:

- *Today* (Cat. avui)
- *This week, etc.* (Cat. Aquesta setmana)
- *Never* (Cat. mai)
- *Just* (Cat. -)
- *Already* (Cat. ja)
- *Ever* (in questions) (Cat. alguna vegada)
- *Yet* (in questions) (Cat. ja)
- *Yet* (in negatives) (encara not)

Some of these adverbs need an explanation:

1) *Just* has no equivalent word in Catalan or Spanish. The adverb is used to say that the action has finished very recently. In Catalan and Spanish, we express this idea with the expression: ‘acabar de’ + verb. Examples:

- I have *just* met Mr Bramwell (Cat. *M’acabo de* trobar el Sr. Bramwell).
- He has *just* gone (Cat. *Acaba de* marxar)

2) *Yet* is only used in questions and negative sentences. We usually place it at the end of the sentence. Examples:

- Have you started the course *yet*? (Cat. Has començat *ja* el curs?)
- We haven’t met Mr Bramwell *yet* (Cat. *Encara no* hem conegut el Sr. Bramvell)

### The present perfect continuous

The present perfect continuous combines the perfect tenses and the continuous tenses. The form is composed of three elements: the auxiliary verb *have* + the past participle of *be* (*been*) + the gerund of the verb.

The table shows the forms of the present perfect continuous of the verb *work*:

TAULA 2.4. Conjugation of the present perfect simple (irregular verb: //go//)

	Affirmative Long form	Affirmative Short form	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	have been working	've been working	have not been working	haven't been working	Have I been working...?
You	have been working	've been working	have not been working	haven't been working	Have you been working...?
He/She/It	has been working	's been working	has not been working	hasn't been working	Has he been working...?

TAULA 2.4 (continuació)

	Affirmative Long form	Affirmative Short form	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
We	have been working	've been working	have not been working	haven't been working	Have we been working...?
You	have been working	've been working	have not been working	haven't been working	Have you been working...?
They	have been working	've been working	have not been working	haven't been working	Have they been working...?

The present perfect continuous is used in the same cases as the present perfect simple, but sometimes there is a difference in the emphasis on the continuation of the action.

1) The following sentences have the same meaning:

- I *have worked* in this company for 20 years.
- I *have been working* in this company for 20 years. (Cat. Porto 20 anys treballant en aquesta empresa)

But we can only use the present perfect simple in:

- I *have been* a firefighter since 1998.

It is wrong to say: *I have been being a firefighter since 1998*. Remember that there are some verbs that are not used in the continuous forms.

2) In the following sentences, the difference is in the emphasis on the duration of the action:

- The street is wet because it *has rained* all night.
- The street is wet because it *has been raining* all night (Cat. El carrer està mullat perquè *ha estat plovent* tota la nit)

In the present perfect simple, we explain what has happened to explain why the street is wet, the action is finished and it has given a certain result. In the present perfect continuous, we emphasize the duration, not the action itself. With the present perfect continuous, the idea is that it has been raining all night and it is still raining at present.

## Prepositions of time (II)

Apart from the prepositions *in*, *on* and *at*, other common prepositions of time are the following:

1) **Before** (Cat. Abans de):

- *Before 1980*
- *Before Christmas*
- *Before going to work / Before you go to work*

2) **After** (Cat. Després de):

- *After the meeting*
- *After the holidays*
- *After listening to him / After you listen to him*

3) **During** (Cat. Durant)

- *During the week*
- *During the holidays*
- *During the meal*

4) **Until** (Cat. Fins a)

- *Until 8:30 this evening*
- *Until next Winter*
- *Until you finish your work*

5) **From...to/until** (Cat. Des de...fins a...)

- *From 2003 to 2006*
- *From the morning until the evening*
- *From May to July*

6) **For** (Cat. Durant [tot el període])

- *For ten days*
- *For more than one year*
- *For one moment*

7) **Since** (Cat. Des de)

- *Since yesterday*
- *Since last week*

- *Since I was younger*

The prepositions of time generally go before a noun, but notice that some prepositions:

1) can go before a clause:

- *Before you leave* (Cat. Abans de marxar)
- *After you meet Mr Smith* (Cat. Després de conèixer el Sr Smith)
- *Until you see the new office* (Cat. Fins que vegis el nou despatx)
- *Since I met you* (Cat. Des de que et conec)

2) can go before a verb (always in the V-ing form):

- *Before speaking* (Cat. Abans de parlar)
- *After talking to Mr Smith* (Cat. Després de parlar amb el Sr. Smith)

### Some differences between the prepositions of time

#### **During/For**

1) **During** expresses something that happened in the middle of a period of time:

- *I wrote the article during the holidays* (Cat. Vaig escriure l'article durant les vacances)

2) **For** expresses something that happened throughout the whole period of time:

- *Yesterday I worked for 10 hours* (Cat. Ahir vaig treballar durant 10 hores/Ahir vaig treballar 10 hores seguides)

**For/Since** (with the present perfect tense):

1) **For** indicates that an action has happened through the whole period of time indicated:

- *I have lived in the country for only three weeks* (Cat. Fa només tres setmanes que visc al camp).

2) **Since** indicates the moment in the past when the action started:

- *I have lived in the country since 4th November* (Cat. Visc al camp des del 4 de novembre)

### The passive voice

The passive voice is a form of the verb that we can sometimes use instead of the active voice. Catalan and Spanish, as most languages, also have a passive voice.

Compare these two sentences:

- Active sentence: *Mary organized the party* (Cat. Mary va organitzar la festa).
- Passive sentence: *The party was organized by Mary* (Cat. La festa va ser organitzada per la Mary).

### Structure of the passive sentence

Let's see the structure of the passive sentences. Here is our example:

- The party was organized by Mary

The basic elements are:

- 1) The subject: *The party...*: it **does not do** the action of the verb, as in the active sentences. In the passive sentences, the subject **receives** the action of the verb.
- 2) The verb: *...was organized...*: the verb must be in the passive form, which is composed of two elements: BE (in the appropriate verb tense) + PAST PARTICIPLE (invariable)
- 3) The agent: *...by Mary*: the agent is the person who does the action of the verb. It is introduced by the preposition *by* (Cat. *per*). It is very often omitted from the sentence.

---

Like the *past simple*, the *past participle* of the regular verbs ends in *-ed*. For the irregular verbs, see the forms in a list of irregular verbs.

---

### Negative and interrogative passive sentences

To express a passive sentence in the negative or the interrogative, we must apply the same rules as for the verb 'be':

- **Negative:** *The party was not organized by Mary* (Cat. La festa no va ser organitzada per la Mary)
- **Interrogative:** *Was the party organized by Mary?* (Cat. Va ser la festa organitzada per la Mary?)

### Use of the passive voice

We use the passive voice in these cases:

- 1) When we don't know who did the action or when it is very obvious:
  - *English is required to work in an international team* (Cat. Per a treballar en un equip internacional, es requereix l'anglès)
  - *The fire has not been extinguished yet* (Cat. El foc encara no s'ha apagat)
  - *English is spoken in many countries* (Cat. L'anglès es parla a molts països)

Notice that in all these examples, Catalan and Spanish do not generally use the passive voice. Instead, they use the impersonal form of the verb: *es requereix, no s'ha apagat, es parla*

2) When we want to give more importance to the action than to the person who did the action:

- *The company was founded in 1986* (Cat. L'empresa es va fundar/va ser fundada l'any 1986)
- *The victim was taken to hospital* (Cat. La víctima va ser portada a l'hospital)

### Changing from an active sentence to a passive sentence

The change from the active voice to the passive voice will help you understand the differences between these two types of sentences. Here is an example to illustrate the changes:

FIGURA 2.1. Changes from the active to the passive voice

#### Active voice:

MARY	ORGANIZED	THE PARTY	LAST YEAR
Subject	verb	direct object	Adverb of time

#### Passive voice:

THE PARTY	WAS ORGANIZED	BY MARY	LAST YEAR
Subject	verb	direct object	Adverb of time

Notice the following:

- 1) The *subject* in the active sentence becomes the *agent* in the passive sentence.
- 2) The *direct object* in the active sentence becomes the *subject* in the passive sentence.
- 3) The verb changes from the *active voice* to the *passive voice*.

Notes:

- When the subject of the active sentence has an impersonal meaning like *people* (Cat. la gent), *someone/somebody* (Cat. algú) or *no one/nobody* (Cat. ningú), we do not usually express the agent in the passive voice.
- When the subject of the active sentence is a subject pronoun (*I, you, he, etc.*), we must express the agent with the corresponding object pronoun: *by me, by you, by him, etc.*

The table shows the passive voice of some common tenses of an irregular verb (*do*, in the 3rd person singular):

**TAULA 2.5.** The verb tenses in the passive voice (verb: do)

Verb tense	Active voice	Passive voice
Present simple	does	is done
Present continuous	is doing	is being done
Past simple	did	was done
Past continuous	was doing	was being done
Present perfect	has done	has been done
Future	will do	will be done
Infinitive	(to) do	(to) be done

### Passive sentences with two objects

Some sentences have an indirect object and a direct object. When this happens, the two objects can become the subject of the passive sentence. For example:

- Active: *Mary asked **me**(=indirect object) **two questions**(=direct object)*
- Passive: *I was asked two questions by Mary*
- Passive: *Two questions were asked to me by Mary*

## 2.1.2 Communication

Translations and summaries are two important activities that will help you improve your reading and writing skills.

Translating a text means to express the same ideas in your own language (direct translation) or from your own language into another language (indirect translation). Nowadays, there are many automatic translators that can be very useful to understand a text in English, but if you must submit your translation to other people, it will be necessary to make some corrections because an automatic translator will inevitably generate lexical and syntactical mistakes.

On the other hand, summarizing a text means to express the same ideas, but in fewer and usually different words. Summaries will help you improve your reading skills because you will learn to distinguish the most important ideas of a text.

### Translations

When we learn a foreign language (Cat. llengua estrangera), we translate from one language to the other all the time. For example, when we read in English, we mentally translate the language into our mother tongue (Cat. llengua materna) in

order to understand the text. When we write in English, first we think in our mother tongue and then we mentally translate it into English. Similarly, when we speak English, we think in Catalan or Spanish and then we translate our thoughts into English. This is the normal process when you learn English outside an English speaking context. However, as you advance in the study of the language, you must 'learn' to think in English. This means that your thoughts will come naturally in the foreign language.

You should be aware that nowadays many professional documents, like manuals and correspondence, are written in English. As some people do not speak English yet, you should learn how to make a good translation so that other people can understand a text in English. Apart from this practical reason, translating a text will also help you understand the foreign language better and practise your reading and writing skills.

To make a translation, you can use the following tools:

- A bilingual dictionary (paper or online).
- An automatic translator.

The most important thing in a translation is to transmit the same idea of the original language as well as possible, but using the most common structures of the language into which you are translating the text. However, sometimes it is inevitable to lose some information when translating from a language into another.

### **Bilingual dictionaries**

Paper dictionaries are little used nowadays. However, it may be useful to have a pocket dictionary at home or at work for looking up (Cat. consultar) the meaning of unknown words. Online dictionaries are more widely used because they offer many advantages. For example, with an online dictionary it is quicker to find a word (you don't have to turn the pages), it is constantly updated, you can access to lots of extra information, you can always carry it with you in your mobile devices and very often you can also listen to the pronunciation of the word. You can find hundreds of free dictionaries in the web.

Here are some instructions to use a dictionary appropriately (paper or online):

- If the word is inflected, look for the base form (although many online dictionaries include inflected forms). For example, do not look for the meaning of *did*, look for *do*; do not look for *easier*, look for *easy*.
- Do not take the first meaning of the word that you find. Very often, a word has several meanings. You must consider the context and choose the meaning that has more sense in that context. For example, we cannot translate the verb *work* in the same way in: *The computer doesn't work* (Cat. L'ordinador no funciona) as in: *He doesn't work on Mondays* (Cat. No treballa els dilluns).
- Consider the part of speech (it's a verb, a noun, an adjective?). Sometimes they have the same form, but the meanings are different. For example, the

See the 'Interesting links' section for a list of online dictionaries.

word *working* is not the same in *a working day* (adj.) (Cat. un dia laborable) as in *I'm working* (v.) (Cat. Estic treballant).

### Automatic translators

Automatic translators are very much used nowadays for translating words, sentences and whole texts. They are very useful for understanding the meaning of an email in English or a short text from a manual, for example. Automatic translators are more and more accurate everyday. However, a text generated by an automatic translator is usually full of syntactical and lexical mistakes. For this reason, it is necessary to read the resulting text carefully and correct the mistakes, especially if the translation is destined to other people.

Here is a translation of a technical text from English into Catalan. Compare both texts and notice the different syntactical structures:

#### Translations

##### English version

As with many computer-related devices, mice are being combined with other gadgets and technologies to create improved and multipurpose devices. Examples include multi-media mice, combination mice/remote controls, gaming mice, biometric mice, tilting wheel mice and motion-based mice.

(from the website [www.howstuffworks.com](http://www.howstuffworks.com))

##### Translation into Catalan:

Com és el cas en molts aparells informàtics, els ratolins es combinen amb altres aparells i tecnologies per tal de crear dispositius millorats i polivalents. Alguns exemples són els ratolins multimèdia, la combinació de ratolins i comandaments a distància, els ratolins utilitzats en els jocs, els ratolins biomètrics, els ratolins amb la roda inclinada i els ratolins basats en el moviment.

The process is the same in the case of what is generally called a ‘reversed translation’, that is, a translation from the mother tongue into a foreign language. When we write in English, we usually make a reversed translation because we tend to think in our own language and then translate our thoughts into English.

The use of automatic translators for writing in English is not recommended for several reasons:

- The text that you introduce must be very well written and have absolutely no mistakes. If you miss a comma, a graphical accent or misspell a word, the text will be full of mistakes. For example, the translator may interpret the words *anglès* and *angles* differently.
- An automatic translator does not generally distinguish the context or the language style required, so we must make sure that it translates exactly what we mean.
- If the objective of writing is practising your skills, you will miss the effort that you need to make for learning because the translator will do all the work for you.

## Summaries

Writing a summary means to express the most important ideas of a text in a few words. A summary often means to change the words and sentences of the original text, but sometimes you can simply cut down the text by eliminating all the superfluous information and keep only the main ideas. From the point of view of learning, writing a summary is an excellent means of practising your writing and reading skills.

To write a summary, you must follow these instructions:

- Include only the main ideas.
- Do not include superfluous information. This includes: examples, words and sentences to reinforce the main point, repetitions of the main idea to give emphasis, etc.
- Try to use more simple sentences and your own words as much as possible. Where it says: *I was astonished to hear that you had resigned your post* you could say, for example: *I was surprised to know about your resignation.*
- Do not change the information of the original text. You must say the same, but in fewer sentences.
- Do not express your own opinion in a summary or add information that is not in the original text.

Writing a summary requires some practice and some knowledge of the basic vocabulary and syntactical structures of the language, in this case, of the English language. Here are some tips for writing a good summary:

- First of all, read the whole text to have a general idea of the contents.
- Write down what you remember of the text without looking at it.
- Read the text again and underline or highlight the main ideas: see if they coincide with the ideas that you have written down.
- Write down the summary carefully. When possible, choose more simple sentences; you can also use the same sentences, but make sure that you eliminate all the unnecessary information.
- Read your summary. If you think that it is still too long, cut out all the unnecessary details or try to change the sentences for more simple ones. A summary should be as short as possible without losing any important information.

Here is an example of a summary:

### Summaries

Text:

**The Island**

In recent years, we have seen significant developments in cloning. Sheep, cows, cats and, more recently, dogs that have been cloned in the name of scientific progress. One of the potential uses of cloning is to 'grow' replacement organs for people who are ill in human clones. It is this subject that is portrayed in a new film released this week in the USA called 'The Island'.

The film features Ewan McGregor and Scarlett Johansson and it raises awareness of this highly controversial moral issue. However, in spite of excellent performances from both main actors and spectacular special effects, the film received a disappointing reaction from American audiences. It is possible that the subject is too difficult and that some audiences prefer thrillers without the moral dilemmas. The film opens in the UK next week and it will be interesting to see how the British audiences react.

**Summary:****The Island**

The new film 'The Island', which deals with the controversial subject of cloning people, has not been received well in the USA. Although the acting and effects are very good, some audiences may have been disappointed by the moral message of the film.

### 3. Hazards and safety

Electricity can kill or severely injure people and cause damage to property. The main hazards of working with electricity are electric shock and burns from contact with live parts, injury from fire due to faulty electrical equipment or installations, or explosion.

The risk must be assessed, taking into consideration the type of electrical equipment used, the way in which it is used and the environment it is used in. You must make sure that the electrical equipment is suitable for its intended use and the conditions in which it is operated, and that it is only used for its intended purpose.

In wet environments, unsuitable equipment can become live and make its surroundings live too. Fuses, circuit breakers and other devices must be correctly rated for the circuit they protect. Isolators and fuse box cases should be kept closed and, if possible, locked.

Cables, plugs, sockets and fittings must be robust enough and adequately protected for the working environment. Machinery must have an accessible switch or isolator to cut off the power quickly in an emergency.

When you work near electricity, you must assess the risk by identifying the potential hazards and taking sensible measures to avoid it (see some security symbols in figures 1 and 2). You have to learn how to recognize wires. They may be overhead power lines, electrical wiring in a workplace or cables buried under the ground. Look for electrical wires, cables or equipment near where you are going to work and check for sign warning of dangers from electricity.

Work away from electrical wiring whenever possible. If you have to work near electrical wiring or equipment, the electrical supply must be switched off. Make sure the power is off, and never switched on again without you agreeing.

**FIGURA 3.1.** Security symbols**FIGURA 3.2.** Danger sign**Storyline**

Bill and Jordi are on an electrical inspection visit to certify a new lift installation in an existing residential building.

**Bill:** How are we going to pass the cables? That will be a big task, since the house was built without provision for a lift.

**Jordi:** A new underground conduit wiring is needed to connect the control system from the circuit breaker and the conduit must be a tube/pipe for enclosing electric cable.

**Bill:** Ok, I understand. So, what do we do next?

**Jordi:** We have to be certain that the installation complies with the safety regulations.

**Bill:** What about the control panel, where do we install it?

**Jordi:** The lift control panel must be installed at a place easy to reach quickly for operation or inspection without difficulties.

**Bill:** I see. And do we connect the lift to the old circuit breaker in the building?

**Jordi:** No. For safety reasons, a separate circuit breaker device has to be installed for the lift control panel.

**Bill:** Jordi, the entrance to the staircase is very low. What if it floods? We need to take that into account.

**Jordi:** Yes, you are right. A drainage pipe must be provided to allow easy passage of water.

**Bill:** Ok. Earthing is also important, isn't it?

**Jordi:** Certainly, grounding must be provided by an appropriate electrode conductor.

**Bill:** Wow, the control panel will be complicated, with so many cables!

**Jordi:** Don't worry. Proper labelling and identification of all connections in the control panel must be provided.

**Bill:** How do we protect the control panel?

**Jordi:** A permanent place for the control panel against the wall must be provided and securely attached under lock and key.

**Bill:** How do we prepare the quotation?

**Jordi:** Since it is a big project, the quotation will come along with the cost of all materials and equipment, labour, and other applicable charges associated with work to be performed.

### 3.1 Vocabulary

- **Hazard:** perill
- **Injure:** ferir, prendre mal
- **Damage:** dany
- **Faulty equipment:** equips/aparells defectuosos
- **To assess:** avaluar
- **Suitable:** apropiat
- **Intended use:** ús previst
- **Wet environments:** entorns humits
- **Fuse:** fusible
- **Machinery:** maquinària
- **Isolator:** aïllant
- **Wire:** cable
- **Overhead power line:** línia d'alta tensió
- **Cables buried under the ground:** cables enterrats sota terra

- **Electrical supply:** subministre elèctric
- **Without provision for a lift:** sense previsió per a un ascensor
- **Underground conduit wiring:** cablejat mitjançant un tub/conducte subterrani
- **Pipe:** tuberia
- **Staircase:** escala (entrada)
- **Flooding:** inundació
- **Drainage pipe:** tuberia de drenatge
- **Earthing:** derivació a terra
- **Labelling:** etiquetatge
- **Quotation:** pressupost
- **Labour:** mà d'obra
- **Applicable changes:** canvis aplicables

### 3.1.1 Grammar

The *modal verbs* (Cat. verbs modals) form a special type of verbs in English. They do not express actions, but ideas like ability, obligation and possibility. They are also used to ask for permission, make requests or express the future, for example.

The modal verbs are: *can, could, must, should, may, might, will* and *would*

The main characteristics of the modal verbs are these:

- They have no verb tenses: the modal verbs generally refer to the present or the future time, but they have no tenses like the past tenses, the continuous and perfect tenses, or the infinitive. To express a modal verb in any of these forms, we must use an alternative expression with the same meaning.
- The 3rd person singular does not add an -s: *he can, she must, he may*, etc. It is wrong to say: *he cans*.
- They form the negative by adding *not* to the verb, as in the verb *be*: *I cannot, he must not*, etc. It is wrong to say: *I don't can, he doesn't must*.
- They form the interrogative by inverting the order of the subject and the verb, as in the verb *be*: *Can you...?, May I...?*, etc. It is wrong to say: *Do you can...?, Do I may...?*
- They must always be accompanied by another verb in the infinitive form: *I can speak English* (Cat. Sé parlar anglès). The sentence *I can English* makes no sense.

#### Modal verbs: can / could

The modal verb **can** is used to express:

- **Present ability:** *He can cook very well* (Cat. [Ell] sap cuinar molt bé/[Ell] cuina molt bé).
- **Certain possibility:** *It can rain* (Cat. Pot ser que plogui / És possible que plogui).
- **Informal permission:** *Can I go please?* (Cat. Puc marxar, si us plau?).
- **Informal request:** *Can you come please?* (Cat. pots venir, si us plau?).
- **A suggestion:** *We can have a coffee* (Cat. Podem prendre un cafè).

The modal verb **could** is used to express:

- **Past ability:** *I couldn't speak English some years ago* (Cat. Fa alguns anys [jo] no sabia parlar anglès).

- **Uncertain possibility:** *It could rain* (Cat. Podria ser que ploqués).
- **Formal permission:** *Could I go please?* (Cat. Podria marxar si us plau?).
- **Formal/polite request:** *Could you come please?* (Cat. Podries venir si us plau?).
- **A suggestion:** *We could have a coffee* (Cat. podríem prendre un cafè).

These are the **conjugations** of *can* and *could*:

## Can

TAULA 3.1. Conjugation of 'can'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	can	cannot*	can't	can I...?
you	can	cannot*	can't	can you...?
he, she, it	can	cannot*	can't	can he / she / it...?
we	can	cannot*	can't	can we...?
you	can	cannot*	can't	can you...?
they	can	cannot*	can't	can they...?

\* The long form of the negative is spelt as one word (*cannot*). This form is only used in formal written texts. When speaking, we always say *can't*.

## Could

TAULA 3.2. Conjugation of 'could'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	could	could not	couldn't	could I...?
you	could	could not	couldn't	could you...?
he, she, it	could	could not	couldn't	could he / she / it...?
we	could	could not	couldn't	could we...?
you	could	could not	couldn't	could you...?
they	could	could not	couldn't	could they...?

## Alternative forms

The modal verbs *can* and *could* only have one form each. To express the idea of ability, we use *can* in the present and *could* in the past. In other tenses, we can use the expression:

- **Be able to** (Cat. Ser capaç de)

For example:

- *I haven't been able to find a solution* (present perfect) (Cat. No he estat

capaç de trobar una solució).

- *I will be able to speak English one day (future)* (Cat. Un dia sabré parlar anglès).

### Modal verbs: must / should

The modal verb **must** is used to express:

- **Obligation:** *I must go* (Cat. Haig de marxar).
- **Prohibition** (in the negative form): *We mustn't smoke here* (Cat. Aquí no podem fumar / Aquí està prohibit fumar).
- **Predictions:** *You've got a call. That must be James* (Cat. Tens una trucada. Deu ser James).

The modal verb **should** is used to express:

- **Moral obligation:** *I should talk to Mrs Smith* (Cat. Hauria de parlar amb la Sra Smith).
- **Advice:** *You should practise the oral skills* (Cat. Hauries de practicar les habilitats orals).

#### Obligation and moral obligation

The difference between an *obligation* and a *moral obligation* is not very clear because it often depends of the person's point of view.

An *obligation* is something that we must do because it is established by the regulations (for example, *we must wear a jacket to go to a formal meal*) or because we think that it is necessary or very important (for example, *you must go if you want to take that flight*).

On the other hand, a *moral obligation* is something which is not obligatory, but we feel that it is important for us or in a given context (for example, *I think I should practise more if I want to improve my oral skills*).

In Catalan and Spanish, we make the distinction with different forms of the verb. Notice these examples:

- *We must wear a jacket:* Cat. Hem de portar jaqueta / Sp. Tenemos que llevar chaqueta.
- *I should practise more:* Cat. Hauria de practicar més / Sp. Debería practicar más.

These are the **conjugations** of *must* and *should*:

#### Must

TAULA 3.3. Conjugation of 'must'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	must	must not	mustn't	must I...?
you	must	must not	mustn't	must you...?
he, she, it	must	must not	mustn't	must he / she / it...?
we	must	must not	mustn't	must we...?
you	must	must not	mustn't	must you...?
they	must	must not	mustn't	must they...?

## Should

TAULA 3.4. Conjugation of 'should'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	should	should not	shouldn't	should I...?
you	should	should not	shouldn't	should you...?
he, she, it	should	should not	shouldn't	should he / she / it...?
we	should	should not	shouldn't	should we...?
you	should	should not	shouldn't	should you...?
they	should	should not	shouldn't	should they...?

## Alternative forms

The modal verb *must* expresses an obligation in the present. To express an obligation in other tenses, we can use the expression:

- **Have to** (Cat. Haver de)

For example:

- We *had to* wait for three hours in the rain (passat simple) (Cat. Vam haver d'esperar tres hores sota la pluja).
- You *will have to* give an explanation (future) (Cat. hauràs de donar una explicació)
- They *have had to* go immediately (present perfect) (Cat. Han hagut de marxar de seguida).

The verb *should* usually refers to the present (as in: *I should go now*) or to the future (as in: *I should go tomorrow*). To speak about a moral obligation in the past, we can use this expression:

- **Should have** + past participle: *I should have called him* (Cat. L'hauria d'haver trucat).

### Modal verbs: may / might

The modal verb **may** is used to:

- **Express possibility:** *You may have an accident* (Cat. Podries tenir un accident / És possible que tinguis un accident).
- **Ask for formal permission:** *May I ask you a favour?* (Cat. Li puc demanar un favor?).
- **Give formal permission:** *You may sit down now* (Cat. Ara podeu seure).

The modal verb **might** is to:

- **Express a remote possibility:** *You might have an accident* (Cat. Podria ser que tinguessis un accident).
- **Ask for very formal permission:** *Might I ask you a question?* (Cat. Podria fer-li una pregunta?)
- **Give very formal permission:** *You might tell me all you think* (Cat. Pot dir-me tot el que vostè pensa).

These are the **conjugations** of *may* and *might*:

### May

TAULA 3.5. Conjugation of 'may'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	may	may not	'	may I...?
you	may	may not	'	may you...?
he, she, it	may	may not	'	may he / she / it...?
we	may	may not	'	may we...?
you	may	may not	'	may you...?
they	may	may not	'	may they...?

### Might

TAULA 3.6. Conjugation of 'might'

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
I	might	might not	'	might I...?
you	might	might not	'	might you...?
he, she, it	might	might not	'	might he / she / it...?
we	might	might not	'	might we...?
you	might	might not	'	might you...?

TAULA 3.6 (continuació)

	Affirmative	Negative Long form	Negative Short form	Interrogative
they	might	might not	-	might they...?

### Alternative forms

When we express a possibility with *may* or *might*, we always refer to future possibilities. To speak of possibilities in the past, we can use these forms:

- **May have** + past participle: It *may have* rained (Cat. És possible que hagi plogut / Pot haver plogut).
- **Might have** + past participle: He *might have* gone (Cat. Podria ser que hagués marxat / Podria haver marxat).

Other ways of expressing possibility are:

- with the expression **be possible that** + clause: It *is possible that* it rains tonight (Cat. És possible que plogui aquesta nit).
- with the adverb **probably** and the future tense: It *will* probably rain tonight (Cat. Probablement plourà aquesta nit).

### modal verbs: will / would

The modal verb **will** is used to:

- **Express the future:** *The shop will close down next week* (Cat. La botiga tancarà la setmana que ve).
- **Make requests:** *Will you help me please?* (Cat. Em pots ajudar si us plau? / M'ajudes si us plau?).

The modal verb **would** is used to:

- **Express the conditional form:** *I would go if I had time* (Cat. Jo hi aniria si tingués temps).
- **Make formal requests:** *Would you please send me the application?* (Cat. Em podria enviar la sol·licitud si us plau?).
- **Make invitations** (with *like*): *Would you like a coffee?* (Cat. Vols un cafè?).

These are the conjugations of *will* and *would*:

### Will

**TAULA 3.7.** Conjugation of 'will'

	<b>Affirmative</b>	<b>Negative Long form</b>	<b>Negative Short form</b>	<b>Interrogative</b>
I	will	will not	won't*	will I...?
you	will	will not	won't*	will you...?
he, she, it	will	will not	won't*	will he / she / it...?
we	will	will not	won't*	will we...?
you	will	will not	won't*	will you...?
they	will	will not	won't*	will they...?

\* Notice that the short form of the negative is *won't*. This form is used in speech and informal written texts.

## Would

**TAULA 3.8.** Conjugation of 'would'

	<b>Affirmative</b>	<b>Negative Long form</b>	<b>Negative Short form</b>	<b>Interrogative</b>
I	would	would not	wouldn't	would I...?
you	would	would not	wouldn't	would you...?
he, she, it	would	would not	wouldn't	would he / she / it...?
we	would	would not	wouldn't	would we...?
you	would	would not	wouldn't	would you...?
they	would	would not	wouldn't	would they...?

## Alternative forms

The modal verbs *will* and *would* have no alternative forms.

See Unit 3, section 1.1. Grammar to see another way of expressing the future.

## 3.1.2 Communication

Both in our daily lives and in our working environments, asking for and expressing opinions is a very common activity. During a conversation, we express or listen to opinions most of the time. Sometimes we also include our opinions in emails or business letters. When we listen to an opinion, we can do two things: we can agree with that opinion or we can disagree. Opinions are so common that it is necessary to learn how to ask other people about their opinions, how to express them ourselves and how to respond to them.

### Asking for opinions: question tags

The most common ways of asking for other people's opinions are:

- General opinions: what do you think of...?

- Specific opinion: do you think (that)...?

When we speak, we normally omit the word *that*.

Here are some examples of questions asking for opinions:

- *What do you think of the new iPhone?* (Cat. Què opines del nou iPhone?).
- *What do you think of the company's policy?* (Cat. Què en penses de la política de l'empresa?).
- *Do you think that the new CEO is competent?* (Cat. Creus que el nou director general és competent?).
- *Do you think Mr Smith will help you?* (Cat. Et penses que el Sr Smith t'ajudarà?).

When we speak in informal situations, we can also ask for other people's opinions with a *question tag*. For example:

- *The new iPhone is too expensive, isn't it?* (Cat. El nou iPhone és massa car, no creus?)
- *Mr Smith will help you, won't he?* (Cat. El Sr Smith t'ajudarà, no?)

Let's learn more things about the *question tags*.

### Question tags

A *question tag* is a short question that we add at the end of a statement. We normally use question tags to see if the other person agrees or disagrees with our statement or to check if the other person has heard or understood our words. We form the questions tags like this:

- Modal/auxiliary verb of the statement (in the opposite form) + corresponding subject pronoun.

'In the opposite form' means that we must say the question tag in the negative if the statement is affirmative and we must say the question tag in affirmative if the statement is negative.

Here are some examples of questions tags:

- *It's very cold today, isn't it?* (Cat. Avui fa molt de fred, oi que sí?).
- *You will be 50 next week, won't you?* (Cat. Faràs 50 anys la setmana que ve, no?).
- *I should wait, shouldn't I?* (Cat. M'hauria d'esperar, no creus?).
- *She speaks good English, doesn't she?* (Cat. Parla un bon anglès, no és veritat?).

- *You went out last night, **didn't you?*** (Cat. Anit vas sortir, oi?)
- *John has worked in the bank for 10 years, **hasn't he?*** (Cat. John porta 10 anys treballant al banc, no?)
- *You didn't like the trade fair, **did you?*** (Cat. No et va agradar la fira, oi que no?)
- *Mr Smith shouldn't talk like this, **should he?*** (Cat. El Sr Smith no hauria de parlar d'aquesta manera, no creus?)

### Questions tags in Catalan and Spanish

Question tags also exist in Catalan and Spanish. In these languages, there is a great variety of ways of expressing a question tag (see the examples in Catalan). In Catalan and Spanish, the question tag does not depend on the statement, as in English. Here are some ways of expressing question tags in those two languages:

- Catalan: *oi?, oi que sí/no?, no?, no creus?, no és veritat?, a que sí/no?*
- Spanish: *¿verdad?, ¿no es cierto?, ¿no crees?, ¿a que sí/no?, ¿no?*

A very easy way of using a question tag is by adding **right?** to all the statements. For example:

- *It's very cold today, **right?*** (Cat. Avui fa molt de fred, no és cert?)
- *You didn't like the trade fair, **right?*** (Cat. No et va agradar la fira, no és cert?)

### Expressing opinions

When we speak, people will generally understand when we are expressing an opinion and when we are stating a fact. However, sometimes it is necessary to make sure that the other person understands that we are expressing an opinion. To do this, we can use different expressions:

- I think (that)...
- In my opinion, ...
- From my point of view,...

We can also show that we are expressing a strong opinion. For this, we can say:

- I believe (that)...
- I'm sure (that)...
- I'm convinced (that)...

The word *that* is very often omitted in speech.

Here are some examples of opinions:

- *I think we should call a doctor* (Cat. Crec que hauríem de cridar a un metge).
- *In my opinion, your boss is too demanding* (Cat. En la meva opinió, el teu cap és massa exigent).
- *From my point of view, this restaurant is excellent* (Cat. Des del meu punt de vista, aquest restaurant és excel·lent).
- *I believe we must go on strike right now* (Cat. Crec que hem de fer vaga ara mateix).
- *I'm sure Anne is the best candidate* (Cat. Estic segur que Anne és la millor candidata).
- *I'm convinced that you will like the idea* (Cat. Estic convençut que li agradarà la idea).

To express negative opinions, we simply say the statement in the negative. For example:

- *I think we shouldn't call a doctor* (Cat. Crec que no hauríem de cridar a un metge).
- *In my opinion, your boss is not too demanding* (Cat. En la meva opinió, el teu cap no és massa exigent).

With the expressions *I think...* and *I believe...*, we can also express the verbs in negative and the statement in affirmative, like this:

- *I don't think we should call a doctor* (Cat. No crec que haguem de cridar a un metge).
- *I don't believe that we must go on strike right now* (Cat. No crec que haguem de fer vaga ara mateix).

### Responding to opinions

During a conversation, we will probably have to respond to other people's opinions. When this happens, we can agree or disagree with the other person. To agree or disagree, we can use these expressions:

#### Agree

- I agree (with you).
- Yes, I think so too.

Please notice that in English we must say: *I agree, I don't agree* and *I disagree*. It is wrong to say: ~~*I am agree, I am not agree*~~ and ~~*I am disagree*~~.

- Yes, that's right.

### *Disagree*

- I don't agree (with you).
- I disagree (with you).
- No, I don't think so.

When we disagree with somebody's opinions, it is proper social etiquette to express your own opinion on the subject. For example:

- It's very cold, isn't it? - *I disagree. I think it's too warm* (Cat. No estic d'acord. Crec que fa massa calor).

Another way (informal) of responding to an opinion is by saying *yes* or *no* and then adding the subject pronoun and the auxiliary verb or modal of the statement. It is like answering a 'yes/no question'. Here are some examples:

- It's very cold - *Yes, it is* (Cat. Fa molt fred - Sí, que en fa).
- He speaks too low - *Yes, he does* (Cat. Parla molt baixet - Doncs sí).
- We can do it - *No, we can't. It's too difficult* (Cat. Ho podem fer - No, no podem. És massa difícil).
- We were in Japan last year - *No, we weren't. That was Korea* (Cat. Vam estar al Japó l'any passat - No, allò era Corea).

See Unit 1, section 3.1.3.  
Asking questions for checking the way of answering 'yes/no questions'