Telling the Time

How to ask and say the time, the parts of the day, timetables and punctuality, and the history and idioms of the clock, from A1 to C2.

A1–C2 · English Vocabulary, Lesson 3

twenty to eight · on time · at the eleventh hour

The clock *A1–A2*

clock	watch
alarm clock	hour
minute	second
eight o'clock	half past eig
quarter past (8:15)	quarter to (
five past (8:05)	twenty to (8
a.m. (morning)	p.m. (aftern

count to the next hour: 7:40 = twenty to eight

Parts of the day *A1–A2*

in the morning	in the afternoor
in the evening	at night
at midday	at midnight
early	late
today	tonight
yesterday	tomorrow
a day	a week

at + the time: at seven o'clock, at half past six

Timetables and punctuality *B1–B2*

24-hour clock: 06:15 · 12:00 · 18:30 (half past six) · 23:45 · 00:00

On time or in time: on time (at the planned time) · in time (early enough) · in good time

Early and late: early, late, punctual, delayed, behind schedule

Time words: for three hours · since Monday · two days ago · until six · by Friday

Noon and midnight: noon, midday, midnight · 12 noon, 12 midnight

Expressions: on the dot, kill time, time flies, run out of time

*The **18:30** was **delayed**, but we got home **by** nine, **in time** for the news.*

I've lived here for six years (not since six years)

Clocks, law and idiom *C1–C2*

Standard time: Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), UTC, a time zone, local time, railway time

Summer time: British Summer Time (BST), the clocks go forward / go back, daylight saving time (US)

Idioms: at the eleventh hour, in the nick of time, against the clock, turn back the clock, ahead of its time, behind the times, the small hours

Formal: in due course, forthwith, with immediate effect, at your earliest convenience, pending

*The deal was signed **at the eleventh hour**, and applies **with immediate effect**.*

spring forward, fall back (fall = US autumn)

Asking the time

- *Excuse me, what time is it?*
- *Have you got the time, please?*
- *It's ten to six.*
- *What time does the train leave?*

Common mistakes

- ~~seven and a quarter~~ → **quarter past** seven
- ~~in seven o'clock~~ → **at** seven o'clock
- ~~seven thirty o'clock~~ → seven thirty
- ~~They are three.~~ → **It's** three o'clock.

Words with a past

- **o'clock**: short for *of the clock*
- **watch**: Old English *wæcce*, staying awake
- **pendulum**: Latin *pendulus*, hanging
- **postpone**: Latin *post* + *ponere*, put after

My new words

© Trivium Home School · triviumhomeschool.com · Free to print and share in class