



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

B1 · GENERAL ENGLISH

UNIT 3 · B1·3B

Getting around

Theme · Places



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Getting around

Theme: Places

B1 · General English



Learning objectives

- Give and follow simple directions in the city.
- Use articles a / an / the / Ø (no article) correctly.
- Talk about the best way to get around your city.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up · Your last taxi ride

Think about your *LAST* taxi (or rideshare, or bus) ride. In *THREE* short sentences: where were you going, what did you talk about, and how was the traffic?

Where were you going?

Did you talk to the driver?

Was the traffic OK, bad or nightmare?

Lead-in · Predict the commute

Read each statistic. Guess if it is *TRUE* or *FALSE*, then reveal.

1. In London, the average commuter spends 74 minutes a day on public transport.

2. In Amsterdam, there are more bicycles than people.

3. In Tokyo, trains are late (more than 5 minutes) about 15% of the time.

4. In São Paulo, a 10 km taxi ride at 6 p.m. can take longer than a full commercial flight to Rio.

5. The world's shortest scheduled flight lasts 47 seconds (Scotland).

followUp: Which fact surprised you most? Which one is closest to YOUR daily commute reality?

Reading · Why the metro almost always wins

In most big cities, if you want to get somewhere on time, take the metro. Not because it's the most comfortable — often it isn't. Not because it's the prettiest — it almost never is. But because it is the only form of transport that ignores the biggest enemy of urban life: traffic.

A bus can be beautiful. It can have a view. But a bus depends on the same road as every taxi, delivery van and tourist coach. When they stop, it stops. The metro, on the other hand, has its own tunnel. Rain, protest, a president's motorcade — the metro doesn't care. It just goes.

Of course, there are exceptions. Small cities. Late nights. Trips with heavy luggage. Rides where a taxi driver's story is worth ten times the fare. But if you're a tourist with a plane to catch or a local with a job interview at 9 a.m. — the metro is almost always the right answer.

1. According to the text, why does the metro usually win?

(A) It's the most comfortable

(B) It's the prettiest

(C) It ignores traffic

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2. Why do buses get stuck?
 - (A) They share roads with cars
 - (B) They're too slow
 - (C) They break down often
3. When does the writer say the metro might NOT be the right choice?
 - (A) When you're wearing a suit
 - (B) Small cities, late nights, heavy luggage
 - (C) When it's raining

Vocabulary in context

Match the phrase to its meaning.

motorcade — a group of cars driving together, usually with a VIP

protest — a public demonstration, often blocking streets

delivery van — a small truck used to deliver goods

fare — the price of a journey on public transport or taxi

True / False / Not Given

Based only on the text.

1. The metro is usually the most comfortable option.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given
2. Buses depend on the same roads as taxis.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given
3. Metro tickets are more expensive than buses.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given
4. Late at night, a taxi may be a better choice.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given

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React to the text

Answer in 2–3 sentences.

1. Do you agree that the metro almost always wins? What is the reality in YOUR city?

2. Give ONE moment in the last year when you SHOULD have taken the metro but didn't. What happened?

Scan for meaning

Find the word or phrase from the text.

1. the price you pay for a journey

2. a group of official cars

3. a public demonstration that blocks streets

Vocabulary · Getting around

rush hour — the busiest travel time (usually 8–9 a.m., 5–7 p.m.)

traffic jam — cars stuck, not moving

quicker route — a quicker way that avoids the main road

diversion — a longer way around because the direct route is blocked

one-way street — a street where traffic goes in only one direction

roundabout — a circular junction with no traffic lights

go straight on — continue in the same direction

turn left / right — change direction

at the corner — at the point where two streets meet

opposite — on the other side of the street

next to — right beside

between — in the middle of two things

practice

Complete each sentence with ONE word or phrase from the lists.

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1. I'm going to take a ____ through the park — much faster.

2. We were stuck in a huge ____ ____ for 40 minutes.

3. The pharmacy is ____ ____ the bank, on the other side.

4. Go ____ ____ for two blocks, then turn ____.

5. Watch out — that's a ____ - ____ ____.

6. At the ____, take the third exit.

Collocations · verbs + transport nouns

Match each verb with the noun it usually goes with.

miss — the bus / the train / the flight

catch — the bus / the train / the flight

get on — the bus / the train / the metro

get off — the bus / the train / the metro

take — a taxi / a walk / the metro

Odd one out

Choose the word that does NOT belong.

1. traffic jam · rush hour · quicker route · roundabout

(A) traffic jam

(B) rush hour

(C) quicker route

(D) roundabout

2. next to · opposite · between · loud

(A) next to

(B) opposite

(C) between

(D) loud

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3. get on · get off · miss · sing

(A) get on

(B) get off

(C) miss

(D) sing

Word building · noun ↔ verb

Complete each pair.

1. drive → the person: ____

2. walk → the noun (an action): ____

3. cycle → the person: ____

4. travel → the person: ____



Grammar · Articles a / an / the / Ø

1. A / an — one, first mention, one of many — • I saw a taxi. (one, first time) • She's an architect. (job)
• We need a plan. Use AN before a vowel sound: an hour, an umbrella.

2. The — specific, already known, or unique — • I saw the taxi you called. (specific) • The sun / the moon / the president. (unique) • Second mention: 'a taxi... the taxi'.

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3. No article (Ø) — general truths, most cities, most countries, most meals, days — • I love coffee. (general) • Lisbon is beautiful. • Breakfast is at 8. • On Monday(s). EXCEPTIONS with 'the': the UK, the USA, the Netherlands, the Alps, the Amazon (rivers, mountain ranges, plural countries, oceans, seas).

4. Institutions vs buildings — • go to school / church / hospital / prison (as a student / believer / patient / prisoner — no article). • go to the school / the church / the hospital / the prison (as a visitor — with 'the').

Exercise A — a, an, the, or Ø?

Complete each gap with a / an / the, or write Ø for no article.

1. I'd like ____ coffee, please.

2. ____ coffee I ordered is cold.

3. She's ____ architect.

4. ____ Lisbon is a wonderful city.

5. We go to ____ church every Sunday.

6. I visited ____ church next to the museum.

7. ____ moon is beautiful tonight.

8. I love ____ music.

Exercise B — Countries and places

Add 'the' where necessary; write Ø if no article.

1. ____ United Kingdom

2. ____ France

3. ____ Netherlands

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4. ____ Amazon

5. ____ Lake Como

6. ____ Alps

7. ____ Mount Everest

Exercise C — Find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake.

1. I go to the work by metro.

2. The London is my favourite city.

3. She's the architect.

4. We had a dinner at 8.

5. The moon is beautiful today. I love a moon.

Exercise D — Complete the directions

Complete each gap with a / an / the / Ø.

1. Go straight on for two blocks. Take ____ first turn on ____ left. You'll see ____ big red door — that's ____ entrance.

2. ____ pharmacy is opposite ____ bank, next to ____ small café.

3. Take ____ metro to Central Station, then walk to ____ museum. It's about ____ 10-minute walk.

Exercise E — About you

Answer in one sentence. Pay attention to articles.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



1. How do you usually go to work or school?

2. What is your favourite country to visit?

3. Which meal of the day is the most important for you?

Exercise F — Complete the mini-story

Complete each gap with a / an / the / Ø.

1. Yesterday I took ____ taxi to ____ airport. ____ taxi driver was ____ interesting man from ____ Portugal.

2. We talked about ____ life, ____ football and ____ best pastel de nata in ____ Lisbon.

Listening · Lost in a new neighbourhood

A tourist stops a local on the street to ask for directions to a small independent bookshop.

pre

When you're lost, do you ask a person or check your phone first?

What is the best way to give directions in your city?

gist

1. What is the tourist looking for?

2. How does the local suggest getting there?

3. Is the bookshop still open when they'll arrive?

detail

1. What is the FIRST direction the local gives?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



2. Where is the bookshop exactly?

3. What extra tip does the local give?

Third listen — read between the lines

Answer from what is IMPLIED.

1. Has the local been to this bookshop many times? How do you know?

2. Is the tourist good at directions? How do you know?

Useful language from the audio

Match each phrase to what it does.

"Go straight for two blocks." — gives a simple direction with a distance

"Until you hit a small square." — uses a landmark as a marker

"On the corner, opposite the bakery." — very precise location

"You can't miss it." — reassures the person asking

"Not worth taking a taxi." — honest recommendation against a paid option

Voice A: Excuse me — sorry — do you know a bookshop called Livraria da Esquina? I've been walking in circles for 20 minutes.

Voice B: Ah, I love that place. You're really close. Do you want to walk, or should I call you a taxi?

Voice A: Walking is fine if it's not far.

Voice B: Six minutes. Not worth a taxi. OK — go straight down this street for two blocks, until you hit a small square with a fountain in the middle.

Voice A: Two blocks, small square with a fountain. Got it.

Voice B: At the fountain, turn right. Walk for one more block. The bookshop is on the corner, opposite a bakery with a yellow awning. It's between a florist and a hairdresser.

Voice A: Yellow bakery, corner, between a florist and a hairdresser. I love landmarks — I can't count blocks in a new city.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Voice B: You can't miss it. Big wooden door, always open. And one bonus tip — the café on the ground floor of the bookshop makes excellent brownies. Tiny, but worth stopping for.

Voice A: You've saved my afternoon. What time does it close?

Voice B: Eight. You've got plenty of time. Enjoy!

Fourth listen — fill the gaps

Listen again and complete the exact phrases.

1. Go ____ down this street for two blocks.

2. At the fountain, turn ____.

3. It's on the corner, ____ a bakery with a yellow awning.

4. You ____ ____ miss it.

Speaking · Give me directions

In pairs, take turns. Student A: choose a real place near your school/home. Student B: stops A in the street and asks for directions. A must use at least 3 direction phrases and 2 landmarks.

Scene: A tourist asks how to get to the nearest metro station

A: You: give clear, short directions.

B: You: are polite but bad with left/right — ask to confirm.

Scene: Your friend can't find your flat for dinner

A: You: on the phone, describe the final 200 metres.

B: You: standing on the wrong corner, describe what you see.

Scene: A driver stops to ask for the way to the hospital

A: You: give directions AND warn about a road closure.

B: You: in a hurry, ask for the fastest way.

Discussion · getting around

Choose 2 questions.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



What is the best form of transport in your city — and what is the worst?

How often do you get lost, even in your own city?

Do you prefer to walk, take the metro, or drive?

Is your city friendly for cyclists? Should it be more so?

Role-play · The wrong bus

Read your role, prepare, then run the conversation for 2 minutes.

Scene: You get on the bus and 5 minutes later realise it's going the **WRONG** way.

A: You: politely ask the driver where to get off and how to get back to your destination.

B: You: the driver. Explain the mistake in a friendly way, tell them where to change **AND** which bus to take.

Mini-presentation · 60-second commuter's guide

Prepare and deliver a 60-second guide to getting around your city.

Beat 1 (10s) — Your city's #1 form of transport, and why.

Beat 2 (15s) — Rush hour: when to avoid, when to travel.

Beat 3 (20s) — Your personal favourite way to move + one landmark you always pass.

Beat 4 (15s) — Your #1 tip for a first-time visitor.

sample: In São Paulo, the metro is your best friend — clean, fast, and untouchable in rush hour. Avoid buses between 7 and 9 in the morning, and again from 5 to 7 in the afternoon; you will not move. My favourite way to get around is actually walking down Avenida Paulista on a Sunday — the road is closed to cars and the whole city seems to be out. My #1 tip for a first-time visitor: buy the metro card on day one, and never trust Google Maps' estimated taxi times before you check the traffic.

Writing · Directions to your favourite café

Write 60–90 words giving directions from a well-known landmark in your city to your favourite café. Include at least 3 direction phrases (go straight / turn left / opposite / next to / on the corner) and pay attention to articles.

bonus: Bonus — Rewrite the whole set of directions as a single, short WhatsApp message.

Wrap-up · What did we cover?

A/an = first mention, one of many. THE = specific, unique, already known. Ø = general.

Most countries, cities and meals take no article. Rivers, mountain ranges, oceans and plural countries take 'the'.

Good directions use LANDMARKS, not just left/right.

The metro almost always wins — but not late at night, not with heavy luggage, and not when the driver has a great story.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Quiz

1. Choose the correct sentence.
(A) I go to the work by metro.
(B) I go to work by metro.
(C) I go to a work by metro.
2. "She's ____ architect."
(A) a
(B) an
(C) the
3. Which country takes 'the'?
(A) France
(B) Netherlands
(C) Italy
4. 'Fare' means...
(A) a fair event
(B) the price of a journey
(C) the driver's tip
5. " ____ moon is beautiful tonight."
(A) A
(B) The
(C) Ø

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Workbook — home practice



1. Vocabulary recall

Complete each sentence with the best word.

1. Write ONE new word from the lesson and its meaning in your own words.

2. Write ONE collocation from the lesson and use it in a sentence about your life.

3. Write ONE phrase you'd use in real conversation this week.

2. Grammar practice · Articles: a/an/the/zero

Rewrite each sentence using the target grammar of this lesson.

1. Sentence 1 → rewrite it correctly with the target grammar.

2. Sentence 2 → rewrite it correctly with the target grammar.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



3. Sentence 3 → find and fix ONE mistake.

4. Sentence 4 → complete the gap with the correct form.

5. Sentence 5 → write your own example, true about you.

3. Reading recall

Look back at the class-book reading. Answer briefly in your own words.

1. What was the main idea in ONE sentence?

2. What is ONE opinion of the writer you agree with?

3. What is ONE opinion you disagree with, and why?

4. Listening · a follow-up dialogue

Two voices talk about places for about a minute. Notice the target grammar in use.

1. What is the main topic of the conversation?

2. Who sounds more confident and why?

3. Which target-grammar phrase appears TWICE in the audio?

Voice A: So — tell me about your places this week. Anything different?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Voice B: Honestly, yes. I've been trying something new — and it's changed how I feel completely.

Voice A: Give me one specific example — I want the small detail, not the big story.

Voice B: OK: I stopped checking my phone before bed. Just that. And I already sleep better.

5. Writing · a short reflection

Write 70–100 words about the theme of this lesson. Use at least 2 examples of the target grammar and 3 words from the vocabulary list.

6. Reflection

Look back at your notes from class. Answer briefly.

1. What is ONE thing from this lesson you already use naturally?

2. What is ONE thing you'd like to practise more this week? How exactly?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Answer key — Class Book

Lead-in · Predict the commute

1. TRUE — the average is around 74 minutes each day (Transport for London data).
2. TRUE — about 880,000 bikes for about 870,000 people.
3. FALSE — trains are late less than 1% of the time; drivers apologise formally over the intercom.
4. TRUE — with heavy traffic, 10 km in São Paulo often takes 60–75 minutes; SP–Rio is a 55-minute flight.
5. TRUE — between the islands of Westray and Papa Westray in Scotland, about 90 seconds in the air, 47 seconds at record pace.

Reading · Why the metro almost always wins

1. (C) It ignores traffic
2. (A) They share roads with cars
3. (B) Small cities, late nights, heavy luggage
1. (B) False
2. (A) True
3. (C) Not Given
4. (A) True
1. Model: in São Paulo, absolutely — the metro is untouchable at 6 p.m. But my line is always packed, so 'wins' doesn't mean 'comfortable'.
2. Model: last month I took an Uber to the airport — 2 hours in traffic, missed the flight by 8 minutes. Metro would have taken 45 minutes.
1. fare
2. motorcade
3. protest

Vocabulary · Getting around

1. quicker route
2. traffic jam
3. opposite
4. straight on / left
5. one-way street
6. roundabout
1. (C) quicker route
2. (D) loud
3. (D) sing
1. driver
2. a walk
3. cyclist
4. traveller

Grammar · Articles a / an / the / Ø

1. a
2. The
3. an
4. Ø
5. Ø
6. the
7. The
8. Ø
1. the
2. Ø
3. the
4. the
5. Ø
6. the

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



7. Ø

1. I go to work by metro.
 2. London is my favourite city.
 3. She's an architect. (Unless she's a specific known architect — then 'the' is OK.)
 4. We had dinner at 8.
 5. The moon is beautiful today. I love the moon.
1. the / the / a / the
 2. The / the / a
 3. the / the / a
1. Model: I usually go to work by metro — I hate driving in rush hour.
 2. Model: My favourite country to visit is Portugal — I love the food and the light.
 3. Model: Breakfast is the most important meal for me — I can't work without it.
1. a / the / The / an / Ø
 2. Ø / Ø / the / Ø

Listening · Lost in a new neighbourhood

1. A small independent bookshop called 'Livraria da Esquina'.
 2. On foot — it's a 6-minute walk. Not worth taking a taxi.
 3. Yes — it closes at 8 p.m., and they'll get there around 6:30.
1. Go straight down this street for two blocks until you hit a small square with a fountain.
 2. On the corner, opposite a bakery with a yellow awning, between a florist and a hairdresser.
 3. The café on the ground floor of the bookshop has excellent brownies — small but worth stopping for.
1. Yes — she knows exact detail (yellow awning, brownies on the ground floor, closing time).
 2. Not really — she repeats each instruction back and asks for landmarks 'because I can't count blocks in a new city'.
1. straight
 2. right
 3. opposite
 4. can't

Quiz

1. (B) I go to work by metro.
2. (B) an
3. (B) Netherlands
4. (B) the price of a journey
5. (B) The

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Answer key — Workbook

1. Vocabulary recall

1. Open answer — check with your teacher.
2. Open answer.
3. Open answer.

2. Grammar practice · Articles: a/an/the/zero

1. Model answer — see class notes.
2. Model answer — see class notes.
3. Model answer — see class notes.
4. Model answer — see class notes.
5. Open answer.

3. Reading recall

1. Open answer — around 15 words.
2. Open answer.
3. Open answer — 2 sentences.

4. Listening · a follow-up dialogue

1. Model: both speakers compare their own experience of places.
2. Open answer — look for specific detail and full sentences.
3. Open answer — see transcript.

6. Reflection

1. Open answer.
2. Open answer — be specific: what, when, how often.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class