



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

B1 · BUSINESS ENGLISH

UNIT 1 · B1·1B

What do you do all day?

Theme · Introductions & jobs



Unit 1 · B1·1B

What do you do all day?

Theme: Introductions & jobs

B1 · Business English



Learning objectives

- Describe your working day using time expressions and sequence words.
- Use adverbs of frequency correctly (always, usually, often, sometimes, never).
- Compare a normal week and a busy week without mixing tenses.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up · Rank the day

Rank these 5 work activities from the one you spend **MOST** time on (1) to the one you spend **LEAST** time on (5). Be ready to explain #1 and #5.

answering emails

meetings (video or in person)

actually doing the main task of your job

talking to clients or customers

admin — filling forms, updating systems

Lead-in · Time expressions in the right place

Match each time expression with when we usually use it.

1. first thing in the morning

2. around lunchtime

3. later on

4. at the end of the day

5. once a week

followUp: Say ONE thing you do 'first thing in the morning' at work.

Reading · A day in the life of a small-shop owner

Lucía runs a small bookshop in Madrid. She usually opens the door at ten and closes at eight, but that's only half of her real day.

Before she opens, she checks the online orders from the night before and packs them into brown paper bags. She always makes a coffee first — she says the shop doesn't start until the coffee machine does.

During the day, she talks to customers, recommends books she has actually read, and answers messages from her Instagram account. Sometimes she doesn't sell a single book for two hours; then a school teacher walks in and buys thirty at once. That's the job.

After she closes, she still has one more task: writing tomorrow's social-media post. It takes her fifteen minutes if the day was calm, an hour if it wasn't.

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1. What does Lucía do BEFORE the shop opens?
 - (A) Cleans the floor
 - (B) Checks online orders and makes coffee
 - (C) Answers phone calls
2. What is unpredictable about her day?
 - (A) The opening time
 - (B) The number of books sold each hour
 - (C) Where she works
3. What decides how long the evening post takes?
 - (A) The weather
 - (B) Whether the day was calm or busy
 - (C) The number of employees

Vocabulary in context

Match the word/phrase to its meaning.

run (a shop) — be the owner or manager of a business

pack (an order) — put something in a box/bag to send

recommend — suggest something you think is good

at once — all at the same time

calm — quiet, not busy

True / False / Not Given

Based only on the text, choose the correct option.

1. Lucía opens the shop at exactly 10 every day.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given
2. She recommends books that she hasn't read yet.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given
3. A school teacher once bought thirty books at once.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given

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4. Lucía owns a second bookshop outside Madrid.
- (A) True
(B) False
(C) Not Given
5. Writing the evening post always takes exactly one hour.
- (A) True
(B) False
(C) Not Given

React to the text

Choose *ONE* question and answer in 3–4 sentences.

1. What is your version of Lucía's 'the shop doesn't start until the coffee machine does'? Do you have a first ritual at work?

2. Which part of Lucía's day would be the hardest for you: the invisible morning prep, the quiet hours in the middle, or the evening post?

Scan for meaning

Find the word or phrase in the text with this meaning.

1. the moment when a shop or business officially opens for the day

2. a book that has just been published

3. a short message a business posts to its followers

4. a person who often visits and buys from the same shop

Vocabulary · A typical working day

check emails — read and reply to new messages

log in / log out — start / finish using a system or account

take a break — stop working for a short time

run a report — make the system produce a document with data

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follow up — contact someone again after a first message

handle a grievance — address a client who is dissatisfied

quiet day — day with little work / few customers

packed day — very busy day, back-to-back

back-to-back — one right after another (usually meetings)

off day — day when you are not working

on call — not officially working, but ready to help if needed

peak hours — the busiest time of the day

practice

Complete each sentence with ONE item from above.

1. I have meetings ____ all afternoon — no time even for coffee.

2. Tuesday is my ____ this week, so please write to me on Wednesday.

3. The shop's ____ are between 6 and 8 pm — that's when we do most of our sales.

4. Can you ____ with the stakeholder if they don't reply by Friday?

5. The IT team is ____ this weekend in case the site goes down.

6. I only need 10 minutes to ____ this month's sales.

Collocations · verbs that go with the day

Match each verb with the noun/phrase it usually goes with.

block — two hours in the morning

reply to — an email

join — a video call

hit — a deadline

handle — a grievance

take — a break

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**Odd one out**

Choose the item that does *NOT* belong with the others.

1. quiet day · calm day · packed day · easy day

- (A) quiet day
- (B) calm day
- (C) packed day
- (D) easy day

2. log in · log out · check in · sign in

- (A) log in
- (B) log out
- (C) check in
- (D) sign in

3. always · usually · often · yesterday

- (A) always
- (B) usually
- (C) often
- (D) yesterday

Word building · verb ↔ noun

Write the noun form of each verb (the activity or the thing).

1. to meet → a ____

2. to deliver → a ____

3. to plan → a ____

4. to review → a ____

5. to schedule → a ____

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Grammar · Adverbs of frequency

1. What they are — Words that answer 'how often?': always (100%) · usually · often · sometimes · rarely · never (0%)

2. Where they go — • BEFORE the main verb: I always check my emails first. • AFTER 'be': She is usually late on Mondays. • With modal verbs, AFTER the modal: We can sometimes work from home.

3. Longer expressions go at the START or END — • Every Monday we have a stand-up. / We have a stand-up every Monday. • Once a week I visit the warehouse.

Exercise A — Put the adverb in the correct place

Rewrite the sentence with the adverb in brackets.

1. I check my emails at 9. (always)

2. She is late on Mondays. (usually)

3. We can work from home. (sometimes)

4. He answers the phone quickly. (rarely)

5. They take a lunch break together. (often)

Exercise B — True for you?

Write TRUE sentences about your work day. Use ONE adverb of frequency in each.

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1. check emails first thing →

2. have back-to-back meetings →

3. take a real lunch break →

4. work at the weekend →

Exercise C — Fix the word order

Each sentence has ONE mistake in the position of the adverb or time expression. Rewrite it.

1. I check always my emails before 9.

2. She usually is in the office by 8:30.

3. We have every Monday a stand-up meeting.

4. He can sometimes not answer the phone.

Exercise D — Sentence transformation

Rewrite the sentence using the word in brackets, without changing the meaning.

1. I never miss the Monday stand-up. (always)

2. I do not usually take calls before 10. (rarely)

3. Every day she reviews the numbers. (checks / daily)

4. It is common for us to work from home. (often)

5. He is never in the office on Fridays. (works from home)

Exercise E — Interview your neighbour

Ask a partner these questions. Answer with a full sentence including ONE adverb of frequency.

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1. How often do you take a real lunch break?

2. How often does your team have unplanned meetings?

3. How often do you finish exactly on time?

4. How often do you say no to a meeting?

Exercise F — Choose the correct adverb

Choose the adverb that best fits the meaning of the sentence.

1. The team meeting is on Monday at 9. It is on the calendar every week.

2. About once a month there's a small problem with the system.

3. In 5 years, my boss has cancelled a meeting maybe twice.

4. Almost every Friday I finish 10 minutes early.

5. I refuse to answer emails after 8pm — no exceptions.

Listening · A quiet day and a packed day

Two people describe yesterday. One had a calm day, the other had a packed day.

pre

Guess: what makes a day feel 'packed' for you?

What are the first two things you do on a normal working day?

gist

1. Who had the calm day — Voice A or Voice B?

2. How many meetings did Voice B have?

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3. Did anyone skip lunch?

detail

1. What did Voice A do between 10 and 12?

2. Why did Voice B's day feel worse than usual?

3. What is Voice B's plan for tomorrow?

Third listen — read between the lines

Answer from what is IMPLIED.

1. Which of them is better at protecting their time?

2. Whose job sounds more predictable?

Useful language from the audio

Match each phrase to what it does in the conversation.

"To be honest, a quiet one." — answer softly, admits the truth

"Back-to-back from 9." — one-line way to describe a packed day

"That's not sustainable." — says the situation can't continue

"I'm going to block..." — future plan (going to)

"How was YOUR day?" — turns the question back to the other person

Voice A: How was your day?

Voice B: Packed. Back-to-back from 9. You?

Voice A: To be honest, a quiet one. I wrote the newsletter, had one short call, that was it.

Voice B: I'm jealous.

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Voice A: Well, tomorrow I have three interviews, so it balances out. Did you at least eat?

Voice B: A sandwich during the fourth call. My camera was off.

Voice A: That's not sustainable, though.

Voice B: I know. Tomorrow I'm going to block two hours in the morning. No meetings, no messages. Just the report.

Voice A: Good. And how was your day, honestly?

Voice B: Long. But at least the client is happy.

Fourth listen — fill the gaps

Listen again and complete each line with the exact words.

1. Packed. ____ - ____ - ____ from 9.

2. That's ____ ____, though.

3. Tomorrow I'm ____ ____ ____ two hours in the morning.

4. A sandwich during the fourth call. My camera ____ ____.

Speaking · Your normal day vs your busiest day

Prepare 1 minute about your NORMAL working day using at least THREE adverbs of frequency. Then prepare 1 minute about your BUSIEST day this month. Swap with a partner and ask 3 follow-up questions each.

Scene: Small bakery

A: You are the owner.

B: You are the delivery driver.

Scene: Bank branch

A: You are the receptionist.

B: You are the manager.

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Scene: Online shop

A: You take care of orders.

B: You take care of Instagram.

Discussion · your relationship with the working day

Choose 2 questions and speak for 30–45 seconds each.

What's the FIRST thing you do when you sit down at your desk? Why?

Do you prefer packed days or quiet days? What does each one cost you?

If you could delete ONE recurring task from your week, what would it be?

'The most productive people say no to almost everything.' — Warren Buffett paraphrase. True for you?

Role-play · Renegotiating the week

Read your card, prepare 30 seconds, then run the conversation for 2 minutes.

Scene: 1:1 with your manager on Friday afternoon

A: You: your week was packed. You worked 3 evenings. You want to block Monday morning (no meetings). Ask for it.

B: You: the manager. Monday morning is when the team usually syncs. Push back once, then negotiate a compromise.

Scene: Handover with a colleague going on holiday

A: You: you're going on holiday for a week. Explain your normal day in 60 seconds so a colleague can cover you.

B: You: the colleague covering. Ask 3 practical questions — timing, priorities, what NOT to touch.

Mini-presentation · A day in my life

Deliver a 60-second guided tour of your working day. Time yourself.

Beat 1 (10s) — The first 30 minutes: what always happens?

Beat 2 (15s) — The morning block: what usually / often happens?

Beat 3 (20s) — The afternoon: how does it change from the morning?

Beat 4 (15s) — The last 30 minutes: your closing ritual.

sample: The first 30 minutes are always the same — coffee, a quick look at the calendar, and I star the 3 things that must be done. In the morning I usually have one long block of deep work: writing, numbers, or the report of the week. Afternoons are the opposite — often back-to-back calls with clients or the team, and my energy drops around 4. My closing ritual is a 5-line message to myself for tomorrow — top 3 priorities, one thing to protect, one thing I can skip.

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Writing · Describe your working day

Write 70–90 words describing your typical working day. Use at least: 3 adverbs of frequency, 2 time expressions, and 2 phrases from the vocabulary list.

bonus: Bonus task — Slack status generator. Write 3 different Slack statuses for yourself (max 12 words each) using an adverb of frequency: one for a normal day, one for a packed day, one for a day off.

Wrap-up · Quick check

Adverbs of frequency: BEFORE the main verb, AFTER 'be', AFTER modals.

Longer time expressions (every Monday, once a week) usually go at the start or end.

Use present simple for routines — this is the natural tense for 'a normal day'.

'Back-to-back', 'peak hours', 'quiet day', 'packed day' — useful chunks.

Quiz

1. Where does 'usually' go? "She ____ arrives ____ before 9."
(A) usually / (nothing)
(B) (nothing) / usually
(C) usually / usually
2. Choose the correct sentence.
(A) I check always my emails.
(B) I always check my emails.
(C) Always I check my emails.
3. 'Peak hours' means...
(A) the quietest time
(B) the busiest time
(C) lunch time
4. 'Back-to-back' meetings are...
(A) one after another
(B) very short
(C) cancelled
5. Best position for 'every Monday'?
(A) I every Monday have a call.
(B) We have every Monday a call.
(C) Every Monday we have a call.

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Workbook — home practice



1. Vocabulary gap-fill

Complete each sentence with **ONE** phrase from the box.

Word bank: back-to-back · off day · peak hours · follow up · on call · handle a grievance

1. I have five meetings ____ tomorrow. No time for lunch.

2. Please ____ with the supplier if they don't answer by Wednesday.

3. Our shop's ____ are between 6 and 8 pm.

4. The IT team is ____ this weekend in case the site goes down.

5. Friday is my ____ — please write to me on Monday.

6. Part of my job is to ____ when a client is unhappy.

2. Adverbs of frequency — correct position

Rewrite each sentence with the adverb in the **CORRECT** place.

1. I check my emails at 9. (always)

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2. She is late on Mondays. (usually)

3. We can work from home. (sometimes)

4. He answers the phone quickly. (rarely)

5. They take a lunch break together. (often)

6. I check my personal messages during work. (never)

3. How often? — write true sentences

Answer with a TRUE sentence for you. Use one adverb of frequency in each.

1. How often do you check your emails first thing?

2. How often do you take a real lunch break?

3. How often do you work at the weekend?

4. How often do you have back-to-back meetings?

4. Find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake with adverb position or time expression.

1. I check always my emails before 9.

2. She usually is in the office by 8:30.

3. We have every Monday a stand-up meeting.

4. He sometimes can not answer the phone.

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5. Listening — three people describe their busiest day

Three colleagues describe the busiest day they had this month. Notice how they use adverbs and time expressions.

1. Which speaker had the day that felt LONGEST? Why?

2. Which speaker skipped lunch?

3. Which speaker used the future 'going to' at the end?

Voice A: Six meetings, no break between them. I ate a sandwich standing up in the kitchen at 3 pm.

Voice B: My colleague was sick, so I opened the shop alone. Forty customers before eleven. I usually have that many by three.

Voice C: The report took twice as long as I thought. Tomorrow I'm going to block the morning for the report. No meetings, no messages.

6. Writing — describe a busy day at work

Write 70–90 words about a busy day. Use at least: 2 adverbs of frequency (to compare with your normal day), 2 time expressions, and 2 phrases from the vocabulary list.

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Answer key — Class Book

Lead-in · Time expressions in the right place

1. at the very start of the day
2. roughly 12:00–13:30
3. at some point after now, same day
4. just before you finish work
5. one time every week

Reading · A day in the life of a small-shop owner

1. (B) Checks online orders and makes coffee
2. (B) The number of books sold each hour
3. (B) Whether the day was calm or busy
1. (A) True
2. (B) False
3. (A) True
4. (C) Not Given
5. (B) False
1. Model: yes — my day doesn't really start until I read three specific newsletters. If I skip them, I feel off all morning.
2. Model: the quiet hours in the middle. I get nervous when nothing is happening — I prefer being busy and reacting.
1. opens (the doors) at... / the shop opens at...
2. new release
3. the evening post
4. regular (customer)

Vocabulary · A typical working day

1. back-to-back
2. off day
3. peak hours
4. follow up
5. on call
6. run a report
1. (C) packed day
2. (B) log out
3. (D) yesterday
1. meeting
2. delivery
3. plan / planning session
4. review
5. schedule

Grammar · Adverbs of frequency

1. I always check my emails at 9.
2. She is usually late on Mondays.
3. We can sometimes work from home.
4. He rarely answers the phone quickly.
5. They often take a lunch break together.
1. Model: I usually check my emails first thing, but I try not to answer them until 10.
2. Model: I sometimes have back-to-back meetings, especially on Tuesdays.
3. Model: I rarely take a real lunch break — most days I eat at my desk.
4. Model: I never work at the weekend. That's my rule.
1. I always check my emails before 9.
2. She is usually in the office by 8:30.
3. We have a stand-up meeting every Monday. (or: Every Monday we have a stand-up meeting.)

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4. He sometimes can't answer the phone.
1. I always attend the Monday stand-up.
2. I rarely take calls before 10.
3. She checks the numbers daily.
4. We often work from home.
5. He always works from home on Fridays.
1. Model: I rarely take a real lunch break — I eat while I answer emails.
2. Model: We sometimes have unplanned meetings, usually when something breaks in production.
3. Model: I usually finish 15–30 minutes late. Almost never on time.
4. Model: I rarely say no — but I'm trying to change that this month.
1. always (it happens every week)
2. sometimes / occasionally
3. rarely / hardly ever
4. usually
5. never

Listening · A quiet day and a packed day

1. Voice A.
2. Five, back-to-back.
3. Yes — Voice B ate a sandwich during the fourth call.
1. Wrote next month's newsletter and had one 20-minute call.
2. One meeting ran over, so the rest of the day was 15 minutes late.
3. Block two hours in the morning for deep work and refuse any meeting during that time.
1. Voice A — she gave herself a clear 2-hour block for writing. Voice B has to fix it tomorrow.
2. Voice A's — she describes a normal, planned day. Voice B is reacting to whatever comes in.
1. back-to-back
2. not sustainable
3. going to block
4. was off

Quiz

1. (A) usually / (nothing)
2. (B) I always check my emails.
3. (B) the busiest time
4. (A) one after another
5. (C) Every Monday we have a call.

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Answer key — Workbook

1. Vocabulary gap-fill

1. back-to-back
2. follow up
3. peak hours
4. on call
5. off day
6. handle a grievance

2. Adverbs of frequency — correct position

1. I always check my emails at 9.
2. She is usually late on Mondays.
3. We can sometimes work from home.
4. He rarely answers the phone quickly.
5. They often take a lunch break together.
6. I never check my personal messages during work.

3. How often? — write true sentences

1. Model: I usually check my emails first thing — it's a bad habit.
2. Model: I rarely take a real lunch break. I eat at my desk most days.
3. Model: I never work at the weekend. That's my rule.
4. Model: I sometimes have back-to-back meetings on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

4. Find and fix the mistake

1. I always check my emails before 9.
2. She is usually in the office by 8:30.
3. We have a stand-up meeting every Monday.
4. He sometimes can't answer the phone.

5. Listening — three people describe their busiest day

1. Speaker 2 — she opened the shop alone (a colleague was sick) and had 40 customers before 11 am.
2. Speaker 1 — 'I ate a sandwich standing up in the kitchen at 3 pm.'
3. Speaker 3 — 'Tomorrow I'm going to block the morning for the report.'

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