



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

B1 · BUSINESS ENGLISH

UNIT 5 · B1·5A

Business travel that actually works

Theme · Travel & logistics



Unit 5 · B1·5A

Business travel that actually works

Theme: *Travel & logistics*

B1 · Business English



Learning objectives

- Talk about past trips and travel experiences using present perfect and past simple.
- Book, change and confirm flights, hotels and transfers politely.
- Handle small-talk on the road: airport, taxi, hotel and dinner.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up · Traveller's checklist

Answer YES or NO to each item. Be ready to explain your last YES and last NO.

I've flown for work in the last 12 months.

I've had a flight cancelled or heavily delayed.

I've used a company travel policy or expense tool.

I've stayed in a hotel more than 3 nights in a row this year.

I've eaten at the airport in the last month.

Lead-in · Match the trip moment to the phrase

Match each phrase to the moment on the trip.

1. "I'd like to check in, please. My reservation is under García."

2. "Is this seat taken?"

3. "Could I have the receipt, please?"

4. "What time is check-out?"

5. "Sorry, I've been travelling since 5 a.m. — I'll keep this short."

followUp: Which of these do you say MOST often on a work trip?

Reading · The 3 rules of stress-free business travel

Experienced business travellers all agree on three unofficial rules. First: never check a bag on a same-day trip. If your flight is delayed and your bag is lost, the meeting is lost too. Carry-on only.

Second: build a 90-minute buffer at every airport. Traffic, security lines and boarding chaos always take longer than you think. If you have never missed a flight, congratulations — you have also probably wasted a lot of time. A missed connection costs a full day; an early arrival costs one coffee.

Third: keep every receipt. Modern travel-expense tools can scan them from your phone, but if you have lost the paper, you have lost the money. Finance departments are polite but strict: no receipt, no reimbursement.

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1. Why do experienced travellers avoid checked bags on same-day trips?
 - (A) It costs money
 - (B) If the bag is lost, the meeting is lost too
 - (C) It's slower to pack
2. What's the recommended airport buffer?
 - (A) 30 minutes
 - (B) 60 minutes
 - (C) 90 minutes
3. What happens if you lose a receipt?
 - (A) Finance sends a warning
 - (B) You cannot be reimbursed
 - (C) You must fill in a form

Vocabulary in context

Find these words in the text and match them to the meaning.

carry-on — a small bag you take on board the plane

buffer — extra time or space just in case

connection — the second flight of a journey

reimbursement — getting your money back from your company

True / False / Not Given

Based only on the text, choose the correct option.

1. Checking a bag is always a bad idea.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given
2. A missed connection can cost a full day.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given
3. The article recommends a specific expense tool by name.
 - (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given

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4. Finance departments accept expenses without a receipt.
- (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given
5. Experienced travellers agree on three rules.
- (A) True
 - (B) False
 - (C) Not Given

React to the text

Discuss briefly. There is no single correct answer.

1. Which of the three rules do YOU already follow? Which one do you break?

2. Is there a fourth 'unofficial rule' you'd add for your industry?

Scan for meaning

Find the phrase in the text that matches each definition.

1. a small bag you take onto the plane

2. extra time just in case

3. the money the company gives you back

4. the second flight of a journey

Vocabulary · Travel and expenses

book a flight / hotel — reserve a seat or a room

check in / check out — arrive at / leave a hotel or a flight

boarding pass — the ticket you show to board the plane

layover / stopover — time between two flights

one-way / return — a single ticket / going and coming back

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aisle / window seat — the seat by the walkway / by the window

per diem — a fixed daily amount for meals and small costs

expense claim — the document you submit for reimbursement

receipt — the paper or PDF proof of payment

shuttle — a small bus between the airport and a hotel

loyalty programme — airline / hotel points system

off-peak / peak season — cheaper time of year / busier and pricier

practice

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

1. I always ask for an ____ seat — I like to stretch my legs.

2. My ____ ____ in Frankfurt is 4 hours — long enough for a shower.

3. Our ____ ____ in Berlin is €65 per day for meals.

4. Don't forget to submit the ____ ____ by Friday.

5. There's a free ____ every 20 minutes to the terminal.

6. Please keep every ____ — even for coffee.

Collocations · travel verbs

Match each verb with the noun it usually goes with.

catch — a flight

miss — a connection

check into — a hotel

board — a plane

clear — security / customs

file — an expense claim

Odd one out

Choose the word that does NOT belong.

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1. aisle · window · middle · budget
 - (A) aisle
 - (B) window
 - (C) middle
 - (D) budget
2. shuttle · taxi · metro · invoice
 - (A) shuttle
 - (B) taxi
 - (C) metro
 - (D) invoice
3. receipt · expense · per diem · deadline
 - (A) receipt
 - (B) expense
 - (C) per diem
 - (D) deadline

Word building · verb ↔ noun

Complete the pair.

1. to travel → a ____

2. to arrive → an ____

3. to depart → a ____

4. to reserve → a ____

5. to cancel → a ____

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Grammar · Present perfect vs past simple

- 1. Past simple → a FINISHED time (yesterday, last week, in 2023)** — • I flew to Madrid last Monday.
• We stayed at the Marriott in March. • She missed her connection in Frankfurt yesterday.
- 2. Present perfect → life experience, no specific time** — • I've flown to Madrid many times. • Have you ever missed a connection? • We've stayed at the Marriott before — it's fine.
- 3. 'ever / never / before' go with present perfect** — • Have you ever been to Tokyo? • I've never lost a bag. • I've been there before.
- 4. Once you say WHEN, switch to past simple** — • I've been to Tokyo. (experience) → I went to Tokyo in 2019. (time given) • Have you had breakfast? (still today) → Did you have breakfast? (finished morning)
- 5. Common past-simple time markers** — yesterday · last night / week / year · in 2024 · two days ago · this morning (if it's now afternoon)

Exercise A — Present perfect or past simple?

Complete with the correct form of the verb.

1. ____ you ever ____ (fly) business class?

2. I ____ (fly) to London last Tuesday.

3. We ____ (be) to that hotel three times this year.

4. She ____ (miss) her connection yesterday and slept at the airport.

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5. I ____ (never / lose) a bag — touch wood.

6. ____ you ____ (submit) the expense report yet?

Exercise B — Find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake with present perfect or past simple.

1. I have flown to Madrid last Monday.

2. Did you ever been to Tokyo?

3. She has missed her connection yesterday.

4. I never have stayed at the Marriott before.

Exercise C — 'ever / never / before'

Complete with ever, never or before.

1. Have you ____ used the airport lounge in Munich?

2. I've ____ flown with that airline — I don't trust the reviews.

3. Yes, I've stayed here ____ . Room 402 is the quiet one.

4. Has your bag ____ been lost on an international flight?

Exercise D — Write the sentence

Write ONE sentence for each situation, using present perfect OR past simple.

1. Trip: Milan · when: last April · verb: visit → (past simple)

2. Experience: any Marriott in Europe · verb: stay · question form

3. Life experience: NO lost bag · verb: lose

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4. This week (not finished): submit the expense report · negative

Exercise E — About YOUR travel

Answer each question with *ONE* full sentence. Choose your tense carefully.

1. Have you ever missed a flight? What happened?

2. What was the last work trip you took?

3. How many times have you flown this year?

Exercise F — Complete the travel dialogue

Complete each answer.

1. — ____ you ever ____ (be) to Berlin? — Yes, I ____ (go) there in 2023 for a trade fair.

2. — How was your trip? — Awful. My flight ____ (be) 4 hours late and I ____ (arrive) at 2 a.m.

Listening · A late hotel check-in

A tired business traveller arrives at a hotel at 11:30 p.m. after a delayed flight. Listen for how she handles the check-in and asks about breakfast and the shuttle.

pre

When you arrive at a hotel very late, what are your FIRST 3 requests?

Have you ever been given the wrong room by a hotel? What did you do?

gist

1. What time does she arrive at the hotel?

2. What is the main problem at check-in?

3. How does she solve it?

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**detail**

1. What time is breakfast?

2. What time is the airport shuttle in the morning?

3. What does the receptionist offer as compensation?

Third listen — read between the lines

Answer from what is IMPLIED.

1. Is she an experienced business traveller? Why?

2. Is the receptionist trying to help or trying to close the conversation?

Useful language from the audio

Match each phrase to what it does.

"I'd like to check in, please. My reservation is under Costa." — polite check-in opener

"Have you got any high-floor rooms available?" — polite request for a change

"What time is breakfast?" — practical next-morning question

"Is there a shuttle to the airport?" — planning the departure

"Could I have a wake-up call at 5:30, please?" — polite service request

Voice A: Good evening. I'd like to check in, please. My reservation is under Costa.

Voice B: Good evening, Ms Costa. Welcome. Let me see... yes, one night, checking out tomorrow. I'm afraid the high-floor room you booked isn't available — I can offer you 214, close to the elevator.

Voice A: Hmm, honestly, I've been travelling since 5 a.m. I really need a quiet room. Have you got any high-floor rooms available?

Voice B: Let me check... yes, 812 just became free. Same category, and it's a corner room — much quieter.

Voice A: Perfect, thank you. And what time is breakfast?

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Voice B: Breakfast is 6:30 to 10, on the 2nd floor. And there's a shuttle to the airport every 30 minutes from 5 a.m.

Voice A: Great. Could I have a wake-up call at 5:30, please?

Voice B: Of course. And since we changed your room — a free bottle of water and late check-out until 1 p.m. Enjoy your stay.

Fourth listen — fill the gaps

Complete the exact phrases from the call.

1. I'd like to ____, please. My reservation is under Costa.

2. Have you got any ____ rooms available?

3. What time is ____?

4. Could I have a ____ at 5:30, please?

Speaking · The 60-second trip debrief

Choose ONE past trip (real or realistic). Prepare a 60-second oral debrief. Use AT LEAST two past-simple verbs and one present-perfect experience sentence.

Scene: A trip that went well

A: You: talk to a colleague on Monday morning. Cover: where, why, one highlight.

B: You: the colleague. Ask ONE follow-up question at the end.

Scene: A trip that went badly

A: You: report to your boss. Cover: what happened, what you did, one lesson.

B: You: the boss. Ask 'what will you do differently next time?'

Scene: A frequent-flyer memory

A: You: 'the worst airport I've ever been to' — 60 seconds, no notes.

B: You: listener. Say your own after.

Discussion · how YOU travel for work

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

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Which airport have you passed through the most times? Why?

What's the WORST hotel you've ever stayed in for work?

Do you prefer to travel alone or with a colleague? Why?

What's ONE thing you always pack for a work trip?

Role-play · Rebook a cancelled flight

Read your role, prep 30s, run the conversation for 2–3 minutes.

Scene: Your flight tomorrow morning is cancelled

A: You: the traveller. You **MUST** be in Milan by 11 a.m. for a signing. Ask the airline for options and defend your priority.

B: You: the airline agent. The next flight is 4 p.m. You can offer a competitor's 8 a.m. flight but only if the passenger accepts a different airport.

Scene: Late-night arrival, wrong hotel room

A: You: the guest. It's 11:30 p.m., you booked a quiet room, and you got a noisy one. Stay polite but firm.

B: You: the receptionist. The hotel is 90% full. You can move the guest OR offer late check-out and free breakfast. Try the cheaper option first.

Mini-presentation · 60-second 'the most useful trip of my career'

Deliver a 60-second talk about ONE trip that made a real difference. Use the 4-beat structure.

Beat 1 (10s) — Where and when.

Beat 2 (15s) — Who you met and why it mattered.

Beat 3 (20s) — What CHANGED because of that trip (a number if possible).

Beat 4 (15s) — What you'd do the same or differently.

sample: In 2023 I flew to Milan for a two-day supplier visit. I met the plant manager and the head of quality — face-to-face, for the first time in three years of emails. In two days we solved a defect problem that had been open for six months, and orders went up 30% the following quarter. Next time I'd stay a third day: the informal dinner opened more doors than the meetings.

Writing · A 5-line trip summary email

Write a 5-line email to your team summarising a recent (or realistic) work trip. Include: subject with destination and dates, ONE past-simple sentence about a meeting, ONE present-perfect experience sentence, ONE clear next step. Max 80 words after the subject.

bonus: Bonus task — write the SAME summary as a bullet-point Slack message. Which version would your team read?

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Wrap-up · What did we cover?

Present perfect = experience / no specific time. Past simple = finished time.

'Have you ever...?' + 'Yes, I have — I went there in [year].' is the classic pattern.

Airport / hotel survival phrases: check in, boarding pass, shuttle, wake-up call.

Always ask for the receipt. No receipt, no reimbursement.

Quiz

1. Choose the CORRECT sentence.
(A) I've flown to Madrid last Monday.
(B) I flew to Madrid last Monday.
(C) I flying to Madrid last Monday.
2. '___ you ever ___ Tokyo?'
(A) Did / visit
(B) Have / visited
(C) Are / visiting
3. A carry-on bag is:
(A) a bag you check in the hold
(B) a small bag you take on board
(C) a bag the airline gives you
4. Per diem means:
(A) a fixed daily amount for meals
(B) the total trip budget
(C) a receipt scan
5. Which sentence uses PRESENT PERFECT correctly?
(A) I've never lost a bag.
(B) I never have lost a bag.
(C) I have never lost a bag yesterday.

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Workbook — home practice



1. Vocabulary gap-fill

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

Word bank: carry-on · layover · per diem · expense report · shuttle · receipt

1. I only travel with a ____ — I never check a bag on a same-day trip.

2. My ____ in Frankfurt is 3 hours — enough for a proper meal.

3. Our ____ ____ in Berlin is €65 a day for meals.

4. Please submit the ____ ____ by Friday.

5. There's a free ____ every 20 minutes from the hotel to the terminal.

6. Don't lose the ____ — Finance won't reimburse you without it.

2. Present perfect or past simple?

Complete each sentence with the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. ____ you ever ____ (fly) business class?

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2. I ____ (fly) to London last Tuesday.

3. We ____ (be) to that hotel three times this year.

4. She ____ (miss) her connection yesterday and slept at the airport.

5. ____ you ____ (submit) the expense report yet?

6. I ____ (never / lose) a bag on an international flight.

3. Choose the correct polite phrase

Choose the option that sounds most professional at the hotel or airport.

1. Late arrival at the hotel:

- (A) Give me a room.
- (B) I'd like to check in, please. My reservation is under Silva.
- (C) You have a room for me?

2. Asking for a quieter room:

- (A) This room is bad.
- (B) Have you got any high-floor rooms available?
- (C) I don't want this room.

3. Asking for a receipt:

- (A) Give me the paper.
- (B) Could I have the receipt, please?
- (C) I need paper.

4. Asking for the airport shuttle:

- (A) When bus?
- (B) Is there a shuttle to the airport?
- (C) How I go airport?

4. Find and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake with present perfect / past simple or travel vocabulary.

1. I have flown to Madrid last Monday.

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2. Did you ever been to Tokyo?

3. I never have stayed at the Marriott before.

4. The bus of shuttle goes every 20 minutes.

5. Listening — three airport announcements

Three short airport announcements. Notice who gives useful information and who leaves passengers confused.

1. Which announcement is **CLEAREST**?

2. Which is **USELESS**?

3. Which is **POLITE** and complete?

Voice A: Passengers on flight to Madrid, your flight is delayed. Please wait.

Voice B: Flight IB3145 to Madrid has been moved from Gate B12 to Gate B27, new departure time 15:40, due to a late incoming aircraft.

Voice C: Ladies and gentlemen, we're sorry to announce that flight LH441 will now depart at 16:20 instead of 15:30 because of weather in Munich. Thank you for your patience.

6. Writing — a 5-line trip summary email

Write a 5-line email to your team summarising a recent (or realistic) work trip. Include **ONE** past-simple sentence about a meeting, **ONE** present-perfect experience sentence, and **ONE** clear next step. Max 80 words.

7. Case study reflection

Look back at the *Cerâmica Vista Ria* case. Answer briefly, in your own words.

1. Which shipping option would **YOU** choose for the first Nordic order? Why?

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2. What is the biggest risk of choosing the CHEAPEST shipping option?

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Answer key — Class Book

Lead-in · Match the trip moment to the phrase

1. arriving at the hotel reception
2. boarding a plane / train
3. paying a taxi or a meal for expenses
4. the morning of departure at the hotel
5. starting a meeting after a long flight

Reading · The 3 rules of stress-free business travel

1. (B) If the bag is lost, the meeting is lost too
2. (C) 90 minutes
3. (B) You cannot be reimbursed
1. (B) False
2. (A) True
3. (C) Not Given
4. (B) False
5. (A) True
1. Model: I always carry on. But I've lost receipts twice this year — I still don't have a good system.
2. Model: for events, always book the hotel next to the venue — 10 minutes of walking with a suit and a laptop is worth €50 more per night.
1. carry-on
2. buffer
3. reimbursement
4. connection

Vocabulary · Travel and expenses

1. aisle
2. layover
3. per diem
4. expense claim
5. shuttle
6. receipt
1. (D) budget
2. (D) invoice
3. (D) deadline
1. traveller / trip
2. arrival
3. departure
4. reservation
5. cancellation

Grammar · Present perfect vs past simple

1. Have you ever flown
2. flew
3. have been
4. missed
5. have never lost
6. Have you submitted
1. I flew to Madrid last Monday.
2. Have you ever been to Tokyo?
3. She missed her connection yesterday.
4. I have never stayed at the Marriott before.
1. ever
2. never
3. before

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4. ever

1. I visited Milan last April.
2. Have you (ever) stayed at any Marriott in Europe?
3. I've never lost a bag.
4. I haven't submitted the expense report yet.

1. Model: Yes, I missed a flight to Barcelona in 2022 because of traffic. I slept at the airport and flew out the next morning.

2. Model: My last work trip was to Amsterdam in October — a two-day conference.

3. Model: I've flown seven times this year, mostly within Europe.

1. Have you ever been to Berlin? — Yes, I went there in 2023 for a trade fair.

2. My flight was 4 hours late and I arrived at 2 a.m.

Listening · A late hotel check-in

1. 11:30 p.m., after a 3-hour flight delay.

2. The room she booked (quiet side, high floor) is not available — she is offered a lower floor near the elevator.

3. She politely asks if any high-floor room is free — the receptionist finds one on the 8th floor.

1. 6:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

2. Every 30 minutes, from 5 a.m.

3. A free bottle of water and a late check-out until 1 p.m.

1. Yes — she knows exactly what to ask (breakfast time, shuttle, quiet room) and stays polite even after a delay.

2. Really trying to help — offers a free bottle of water and late check-out without being asked.

1. check in

2. high-floor

3. breakfast

4. wake-up call

Quiz

1. (B) I flew to Madrid last Monday.
2. (B) Have / visited
3. (B) a small bag you take on board
4. (A) a fixed daily amount for meals
5. (A) I've never lost a bag.

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Answer key — Workbook

1. Vocabulary gap-fill

1. carry-on
2. layover
3. per diem
4. expense report
5. shuttle
6. receipt

2. Present perfect or past simple?

1. Have you ever flown
2. flew
3. have been
4. missed
5. Have you submitted
6. have never lost

3. Choose the correct polite phrase

1. (B) I'd like to check in, please. My reservation is under Silva.
2. (B) Have you got any high-floor rooms available?
3. (B) Could I have the receipt, please?
4. (B) Is there a shuttle to the airport?

4. Find and fix the mistake

1. I flew to Madrid last Monday.
2. Have you ever been to Tokyo?
3. I have never stayed at the Marriott before.
4. The shuttle (bus) goes every 20 minutes.

5. Listening — three airport announcements

1. Voice B — states the flight number, the new gate, the new time and the reason.
2. Voice A — says the flight is 'delayed' without a new time or a new gate.
3. Voice C — apologises, gives the reason, the new time, and thanks passengers for their patience.

7. Case study reflection

1. Model: the mid-price air-freight option. Sea is too slow for a first order that **MUST** be perfect on arrival, and the ultra-fast courier eats the whole margin.
2. Model: a 6-week sea shipment through Rotterdam risks arriving after the buyer's launch date. Late delivery on order #1 = no order #2.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class