



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

C1 · GENERAL ENGLISH

UNIT 6 · 6B

Can't give it up

Theme · Help & Habit



Unit 6 · 6B

Can't give it up

Theme: Help & Habit

Learning objectives

- Expand C1 vocabulary related to **phones and technology, adjectives + prepositions**.
- Use **conditional sentences** accurately and idiomatically.
- Read a discursive text and discuss inferences beyond the literal.
- Speak fluently on the unit's theme with a partner or in a small group.

This booklet accompanies the digital lesson at

alunos.apexenglish.com.br/general-c1/6b. Interactive audio, video and drag-and-drop tasks live online; use this booklet in class and to review.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up

In pairs, talk for about a minute on each prompt before feedback:

- 1 What comes to mind when you hear the theme **“Help & Habit”**?
- 2 How comfortable are you using vocabulary about **phones and technology, adjectives + prepositions**? Give one recent example.
- 3 When did you last use — or misuse — **conditional sentences**?

Reading

The last thing before we sleep

If you asked a millennial in a British city today what they last did before falling asleep, the honest answer would, apparently, involve a phone. According to a 2023 report from Ofcom, roughly seventy per cent of UK adults under forty check their device within thirty minutes of switching off the light. What is striking is not the figure itself — that has been climbing for a decade — but how few of those checks appear to serve any real purpose.

Behavioural researchers at the University of Bath have been trying, patiently, to explain the pattern. Their conclusion, published quietly last autumn, is unglamorous. The pre-sleep phone check, they argue, is almost never information-seeking. It is, in the language of the paper, a self-soothing loop. Had we not been trained by the device itself to expect a small pleasant surprise every few minutes, we would probably not open it at 11.47 pm to look at nothing in particular.

There is, of course, a familiar chorus of criticism aimed at the platforms. Design choices — the infinite scroll, the variable-reward notification, the red badge — have been repeatedly shown to exploit exactly the same reward circuitry as slot machines. Were the platforms held to the standards we apply to the gambling industry, several of their most profitable features would arguably not be legal.

But the paper's more uncomfortable point is not about the platforms; it is about us. We are, it turns out, remarkably wary of the idea that our behaviour is being shaped, yet remarkably reliant on the very features that shape it. We claim to be immune to manipulation while checking, every eleven minutes, whether the shape of the world has meaningfully changed in our absence.

The prescription the Bath team offer is not, mercifully, another list of app blockers. It is, instead, a quiet observation: the people who report the greatest recovery of attention are the ones who removed exactly one app — the one they knew, before opening the settings menu, they should never have installed in the first place.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Comprehension — choose the best answer.

1. The Ofcom 2023 statistic quoted in the article is:
 - (A) 30% of UK adults check within an hour of sleeping
 - (B) 70% of UK adults under 40 check within 30 minutes of switching off the light
 - (C) 70% of UK teenagers sleep with their phones
 - (D) 50% of British millennials wake to a phone alarm
2. The Bath researchers' central finding is that pre-sleep phone use is:
 - (A) motivated by real information-seeking
 - (B) a self-soothing loop trained by the device
 - (C) declining in the under-40s
 - (D) protective against insomnia
3. The comparison the article draws is between the platforms and:
 - (A) television
 - (B) the gambling industry
 - (C) traditional advertising
 - (D) junk food
4. The 'more uncomfortable point' of the paper is that:
 - (A) the platforms should be regulated more
 - (B) we claim immunity to manipulation while relying on the manipulating features
 - (C) phones cause loneliness
 - (D) adults sleep worse than children
5. The Bath team's practical prescription is:
 - (A) a total digital detox
 - (B) installing an app blocker
 - (C) deleting the one app you already know you shouldn't have installed
 - (D) using airplane mode after 9 pm
6. The tone of the piece is best described as:
 - (A) cautiously diagnostic
 - (B) openly alarmist
 - (C) campaigning and polemical
 - (D) sentimentally nostalgic

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Vocabulary

Focus: **phones and technology, adjectives + prepositions**

Study these C1 items and their meanings.

doom-scrolling — compulsively scrolling through bad news

phantom vibration — the sensation your phone buzzed when it didn't

notification fatigue — exhaustion from constant alerts

screen time — the total time spent using a device with a screen

muscle memory (tap) — unlocking an app without conscious intent

read receipt — an indicator showing a message has been seen

airplane mode — a setting that disables all wireless signals

battery anxiety — unease at seeing a phone battery below a comfort threshold

addicted to — unable to stop using or doing something

hooked on — informal: strongly attracted to and unable to stop

obsessed with — unable to stop thinking about

reliant on — dependent on for functioning

wary of — cautious and suspicious of

immune to — not affected by

prone to — likely to suffer from or do

oblivious to — completely unaware of

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Grammar

Focus: **conditional sentences**

Study the online lesson notes, then complete the interactive tasks at **alunos.apexenglish.com.br/general-c1/6b**.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Speaking

- 1 Tell a partner about a personal experience connected to **help & habit**. Aim for at least two minutes without pausing.
- 2 Compare cultures or generations on this topic. Use at least three items from the *phones and technology, adjectives + prepositions* list.
- 3 Discuss: *Is it possible to be objective about help & habit?* Justify your view.

Writing

Write 220–260 words on: **“Help & Habit — what has changed in the last twenty years?”** Use at least four items from the vocabulary list and one structure from the grammar focus (*conditional sentences*).

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Workbook

Home practice

Complete on your own; check answers in class.

1. 'She's exhausted now because she didn't sleep last night.' → mixed conditional:
(A) If she had slept, she wouldn't be exhausted.
(B) If she had slept, she wouldn't have been exhausted.
(C) If she slept, she wouldn't be exhausted.
(D) If she would sleep, she wouldn't be exhausted.
2. Inverted form of 'If we had realised...' →
(A) Had we realised...
(B) Have we realised...
(C) Would we have realised...
(D) Did we have realised...
3. Inverted 2nd conditional (formal) 'If I were to accept...' →
(A) Were I to accept...
(B) Was I to accept...
(C) Would I to accept...
(D) Had I to accept...
4. 'You'll be late _____ you leave now.'
(A) provided
(B) unless
(C) in case
(D) even if
5. 'Take an umbrella _____ it rains later.' (= as a precaution)
(A) if
(B) unless
(C) in case
(D) provided

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

[← Back to C1 General contents](#)

Workbook · 6B. Can't give it up

Home practice · mixed & inverted conditionals · phones & technology · answer key included



Class Book

Full lesson · in-class material



Workbook

Home practice · with answer key

GRAMMAR

10 min

1 · Conditionals — choose the best option

1. 'She's exhausted now because she didn't sleep last night.' → mixed conditional:

a. If she had slept, she wouldn't be exhausted. ✓

b. If she had slept, she wouldn't have been exhausted.

c. If she slept, she wouldn't be exhausted.

d. If she would sleep, she wouldn't be exhausted.

2. Inverted form of 'If we had realised...' →

a. Had we realised... ✓

b. Have we realised...

c. Would we have realised...

d. Did we have realised...

3. Inverted 2nd conditional (formal) 'If I were to accept...' →

a. Were I to accept... ✓

b. Was I to accept...

c. Would I to accept...

d. Had I to accept...

4. 'You'll be late _____ you leave now.'

a. provided

b. unless ✓

c. in case

d. even if

5. 'Take an umbrella _____ it rains later.' (= as a precaution)

a. if

b. unless

c. in case ✓

d. provided

Score: 5 / 5

Try again

VOCABULARY

2 · Complete with a technology term from the box

10 min

WORD BANK — DRAG OR TAP, THEN TAP A GAP

doom-scrolling

screen time

muscle memory

notification fatigue

battery anxiety

1. By 4pm I have such **notification fatigue** **notification fatigue** I can't tell which alert matters anymore.
2. I opened the app out of pure **muscle memory** **muscle memory** — I don't even remember tapping it.

3. Twenty minutes of doom-scrolling doom-scrolling before breakfast is a terrible way to start the day.
4. My weekly screen time screen time report was, frankly, humiliating.
5. Below 15% I get real battery anxiety battery anxiety — I start rationing my apps.

Score: 5 / 5

🔄 Try again

GRAMMAR

10 min

3 · Rewrite using the structure in brackets

1. *'If I hadn't installed TikTok in 2020, I would be less distracted now.'* → *inverted*

Hide answer

Had I not installed TikTok in 2020, I would be less distracted now.

2. *'If they had told me earlier, I could have booked a flight.'* → *inverted*

Hide answer

Had they told me earlier, I could have booked a flight.

3. *'If you don't pay by Friday, they will cancel the subscription.'* → using *'unless'*

Hide answer

Unless you pay by Friday, they will cancel the subscription.

4. *'You can go out — but only if you take a coat.'* → using *'provided that'*

Hide answer

You can go out provided that you take a coat.

VOCABULARY +

8 min

4 · Adjectives + prepositions

DRAG THE MEANING ONTO THE WORD

Reset

completely unaware of

cautious and suspicious of

not affected by

likely to suffer from or do

unable to stop using or doing

addicted to

unable to stop using
or doing

Hide answer

unable to stop using or doing

wary of

cautious and
suspicious of

Hide answer

cautious and suspicious of

immune to

not affected by

Hide answer

not affected by

prone to

likely to suffer from or
do

Hide answer

likely to suffer from or do

oblivious to

completely unaware of

Hide answer

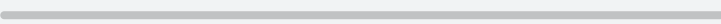
completely unaware of

LISTENING

10 min

5 · Voice message · A 24-hour test

Listen to a voice message left by an English friend after 24 hours off his phone.

▶ 0:00 / 0:00   

1. How did he actually manage the 24 hours?

Hide answer

He kept the phone on airplane mode in another room; he unlocked it twice out of pure muscle memory but caught himself both times.

2. What did he notice about his 'notification fatigue'?

Hide answer

That the physical twitchiness in his hands only faded around hour four — which he found more embarrassing than he'd expected.

3. Which inverted conditional does he use?

Hide answer

'Had I known how quiet a Saturday could feel, I'd have done this years ago.'

4. What is he explicitly 'wary of'?

Hide answer

Turning the experiment into a moral statement — he says he doesn't want to be the ex-smoker of the group.

WRITING

20 min

6 · A short reflection (180–220 words)

Write a short first-person reflection titled: "*The app I already know I shouldn't have installed*". Use at least three conditional structures (including one mixed and one inverted) and two technology / adjective + preposition items. End with an honest, unheroic decision — nothing motivational.

← Back to Class Book 6B

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