



 **POWER BASICS**[®]

Everyday English

POWER BASICS

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To the Student

Welcome to *Power Basics*[®] *Everyday English*. This book will teach you basic English skills. Each unit will show you how these skills are used in a different part of everyday life.

Unit 1: English in Everyday Life will teach you the basics of speaking, reading, writing, and finding information.

Unit 2: English at Home will show you how English skills are used to keep a home. You will learn how to find a place to live, how to shop, and how to cook for yourself.

Unit 3: English Outside the Home will help you use English skills in the world around you. You will gain skills needed to manage your money. You will also learn how to get around using public transportation or driving on your own.

Unit 4: English in the Community will teach you to use your skills to be a part of our nation. You will learn to use your rights and carry out your responsibilities to your community.

Unit 5: English for Health and Safety will explain how to use your skills to get health care and to keep you and your loved ones safe.

Each lesson is made up of short sections that explain important everyday English skills. Each section is followed by exercises to help you practice what you have learned. Each unit ends with a review followed by application exercises. These activities will help you extend and apply what you have learned in the unit.

To the Student, *continued*

Power Basics® *Everyday English* has many special features that make learning easier. “Tips” give you hints on ways to master the ideas and concepts in the text. “In Real Life” sections show you how the skills you are learning are used in the world outside the classroom. “Think About It” questions ask you to think about the concepts in new ways. The “Words to Know” section at the beginning of each lesson includes important new terms introduced in the lesson. The word appears in bold type later in the lesson, and it is defined for you. All the terms in the “Words to Know” section are also defined in the Glossary at the end of the book.

As you move through *Power Basics: Everyday English*, you will gain confidence and skills that will help you in everyday life. We hope that you enjoy this material as you learn.

UNIT 1

English in Everyday Life



LESSON 1: Introduction to English Skills

GOAL: To learn some of the ways English skills are used in everyday life

WORDS TO KNOW

abbreviation	dictionary	main idea
acronym	greeting	part of speech
alphabetical order	headings	pronunciation guide
closing	idioms	skimming
conversation	key words	time-order words

Using English in Conversation

A **conversation** happens when two or more people talk and listen to what the other person is saying. When you were a baby, you told people what you wanted and how you felt, without using words. Today you use conversation to explain your thoughts and feelings so someone else can understand.

When you talk, you want to make sure that your **main idea** is understood. Your main idea is the idea that you most want the listener to remember. This is why it is important to speak slowly and clearly. If the person you are speaking to can't understand you, then you are wasting your time. You can use **key words** to show that you are saying your main idea. Key words are like signs that tell the person you are speaking with to pay attention. Here are some examples:

My point is . . .

What I'm trying to say is . . .

I mean . . .

When listening, your goal is to understand the speaker's main idea. Look out for key words that point out when the speaker is saying this main idea. Also, pay attention to the speaker. When someone talks for a long

time, you might want to look out the window or think about something else. If you do this, you might miss the main idea. Ask questions about anything you don't understand.

Watch out for **idioms**. Idioms are sayings that have a meaning that can't be figured out by looking at the meanings of each word in the saying. Here are some examples:

Idiom	Meaning
Break a leg.	Good luck.
Don't look a gift horse in the mouth.	Don't question something you get easily.
behind the eight ball	in a bad position to get something done

Imagine someone told you to "break a leg" and you didn't know what that meant. You might think that person wanted you to get hurt. That is why you need to be careful about using idioms. Most people might know what you mean, but some might not.

THINK ABOUT IT



To *face the music* means to accept what happens when you make a mistake. A long time ago, when an officer was dismissed from the army, he would have to leave to the sound of drums. There is a reason why idioms mean what they do. To *run out of steam* means to run out of energy. Where do you think this idiom came from? Write your answer below or on a separate sheet of paper.

■ PRACTICE 1: Using English in Conversation

Becky is the manager at a print shop. Lately, the shop hasn't made much money, and the last order went to the customer late. Becky called in all the workers for a meeting. Read what she said to the workers. Then answer the questions that follow. Write your answers on the lines provided.

“Listen, we've got to get on the ball here. If we don't make more money, we're going to be in trouble. We have to do more orders every day. Also, if we can't get our work done on time, our customers won't come here anymore. My point is that we have to work harder and faster, and be on time.”

1. What is Becky's main idea?

2. What key words does she use to point to the main idea?

3. What idiom does Becky use?

Reading English

In the real world, we read all the time. We read road signs, phone books, newspapers, and many other things. Sometimes we read things such as an adventure story or a magazine just for fun. Other times we read to find out a certain piece of information.

Skimming is a way for you to look over a lot of writing to find the part that you really need. Skimming means to look at writing quickly to get an idea of what it is about. This way, you can find the information that is important to you without reading every word.

First, look at any **headings** in the writing. Headings are titles for different sections of a piece of writing. They let you know what that section is about. Then, read the first and last sentences of each paragraph. Just like something that someone says, each paragraph has a main idea. In a paragraph, the main idea can often, but not always, be found in the first or last sentence. This can help you find a paragraph that has the information you need.

Here's an example: Cherise just bought a used car. She wants to know how to make sure the battery has enough power so she doesn't get stuck with a car that won't start. She skims through the owner's manual until she finds this heading:

Battery

All Chevrolets come with a "maintenance-free battery." This means that water does not need to be added to the battery. Still, there are a few things you need to do to keep your battery working well.

Once a year, you must clean the clamps that hold the battery cables to the battery. Loosen the cable-clamp bolts. Remove the black cable from the battery first. Then remove the red cable. Clean the clamps with a wire brush until the metal is shiny. Hook the red cable back up to the battery, then the black one. Tighten the cable-clamp bolts.

Testing the Battery

The water level in a "maintenance-free" battery does not need to be checked as it would in a normal battery. You cannot forget about the battery, though. The cable clamps must be cleaned once a year.

To see if the battery is charged, check the built-in tester on the top of the battery. A large green dot shows that the battery is fully charged. A small green dot or no green dot means that the charge is too low. A yellow dot means the battery needs to be replaced.

Cherise wanted to check the battery, or test it to make sure it had enough power. The heading “Testing the Battery” showed her that this would be a good place to start reading. Next, she read the first and last sentences of the third paragraph from the owner’s manual. She knew that this paragraph was about maintaining the battery, not checking it. The first sentence of the fourth paragraph starts, “To see if the battery is charged . . .” Aha! Cherise found just what she was looking for.

Taking notes is a good way to remember what you have read or heard. When you take notes, you write down the main idea and any important facts. If you need to know the information later, you can look back at your notes instead of having to reread the writing.

For example, Cherise wants to be able to remember quickly how to check the battery. She takes some notes so that she doesn’t have to go back to the manual.

Checking battery - check tester. Green dot = OK.
Small dot/no dot = low. Yellow dot = replace.

THINK ABOUT IT



What are some times when it might be helpful to take notes? Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper.

PRACTICE 2: Reading English

James is planning to go hiking in New Mexico. He bought a guide book to help him decide where to go. Skim the following passage, and answer the questions that follow. Write your answers on the lines provided.

Fishing

(1) There’s lots of great fishing in New Mexico. Because of our laws, we have some of the cleanest water in the country. This means our rivers are some of the best places to catch trout and salmon. At Heron Lake, Bluewater Lake, and Clayton Lake, you’ll have a great chance of hooking a tasty fish.

(2) Before you go fishing, make sure you get a permit from the state. The fine for fishing without a permit is very expensive.

Hiking

(3) New Mexico is a hiker's dream. There are beautiful flowers at Sugarite Canyon State Park. In the Gila National Forest, you can find hot springs to soak your tired feet. The Bisti Badlands are so empty and rocky, you will feel as if you are hiking on the moon. These are some of the best places to hike in New Mexico.

(4) The best time of year for hiking in New Mexico is in the spring and fall. The deserts can get over 100 degrees during the summer. In the mountains, though, it is much cooler. In the winter, the snow is often too deep to hike in.

1. Which paragraph does James need to read to get the information he's looking for? _____
2. What is the main idea of the paragraph? _____

3. What other information should James write down if he is taking notes about where to go hiking in New Mexico?

Following Directions

When you are at work, hooking up a DVD player, or cooking a meal, you have to follow directions if you want to do the job correctly. You only get directions in one of two ways. You either read directions or someone tells them to you. Either way, you can use a few tricks to make sure you don't get mixed up.

Often, directions will be given in the order they need to be done. You simply do each step before going on to the next. Here is an example:

How to Hook Up Your DVD Player

1. Plug the video cable into the back of the DVD player. Match the color of the plug to the color of the socket.
2. Plug the video cable into the television. Match the color of the plug to the color of the socket.
3. Plug the power cord into the back of the DVD player in the socket marked *Power In*.
4. Plug the other end of the power cord into your electrical outlet.

Other times you will need to figure out the correct order of the steps before you can begin. Here is an example:

Stir-Frying Vegetables

Slice up your favorite vegetables. Then, put a frying pan on the stove. Before placing the vegetables in the frying pan, you must first put some oil in the pan and get it hot. After adding the vegetables, stir them often until they are cooked.

We have to look at the **time-order words** to figure out the correct order of the steps in directions like these. Time-order words are words that show the order in which something happened or should happen. In the stir-fry example, the words *then*, *before*, *first*, and *after* show us that we first heat a frying pan, then put oil in the pan, then add vegetables, then stir. Otherwise our stir-fry would be a disaster. Here are the most common time-order words:

first	last	before	then	while
second	finally	after	once	when
third	next	during		

Write down the steps in the correct order before you start following the directions. That way you are less likely to get the order wrong while you are working. Here are the stir-fry directions written in the correct order:

1. Slice up vegetables.
2. Put frying pan on stove.
3. Put oil in the pan and heat it up.
4. Add vegetables.
5. Stir often until cooked.

TIP



Taking notes is a good skill to use when you are following directions. You can write down the directions in a way that is easy for you to go back to when you are working. You can also check off each step as you finish it. This way it is less likely you will skip a step.

PRACTICE 3: Following Directions

Alonzo’s boss gave him some directions that he needed to follow before going home for the day. Read the directions below. Then take some notes for Alonzo, putting his boss’s instructions in the correct order. Write the steps in order on the lines provided.

“Alonzo, please do these few things for me before you go home. Remember the neighborhood cleanup we had last Saturday? Mr. Kim brought a lot of volunteers with him. I need you to mail a letter to him thanking him. You’ll need to type it up on the computer after you get the notes I left on my desk. When you finish typing it, put it in one of the envelopes I keep in my top-left drawer. Use the postage meter in the mail room to stamp it once you’ve written the address on it. Place it in the mailbox on your way out of the office. Thank you.”

Step 1: _____

Step 2: _____

Step 3: _____

Step 4: _____

Step 5: _____

Step 6: _____

Writing English

Have you ever come back from the grocery store without getting what you really needed? Have you ever wanted to tell someone something, but you couldn't find time to meet or talk on the phone? Writing is a way for you to get your ideas out of your brain and onto a piece of paper. When you write something down, you don't have to remember it. You can share your writing with others. This way, they can read your ideas whenever they have the time. You probably use writing all the time without thinking about it. Below are some common ways that people use writing every day.

Making Lists

Shawn is cooking dinner for a special date. Before he goes to the grocery store, he makes a list of everything he'll need.

tuna steaks	lemons	fruit juice
green beans	dill	ice cream
brown rice		

Making a list makes it easier to remember a lot of different things. You can make a list of what to buy, what you need to do for the day, or who to invite for a party. When you make a list, ideas come to you that you wouldn't have thought of otherwise.

IN REAL LIFE



Sometimes, when a group of people have a hard problem that they need to solve, they will make a list. They write down every idea they can think of, no matter how silly it seems. This kind of list is called a brainstorm. When people brainstorm, they are often surprised by their ideas. You can brainstorm by yourself, too.

Filling Out Forms

Lisa wants to join a gym. Before she can join, she has to fill out a form. The form has lines for her to write her name, address, and phone number. It has a space for her to check whether she is joining for six months or a year. It has a line for her to write her credit card number. At the bottom, she signs the form to prove that it was she who filled it out.

Forms are an easy way to get the same information from a lot of different people. Often, you must fill out a form when you want something from a business or the government. You must fill out a form to apply for a job, to get a credit card, or to check into the hospital. When filling out a form, read the instructions carefully so that you put down the right information. If you don't know what to write on a certain line, ask someone.

Writing a Personal Message

Maria received some money from an aunt for her birthday. She writes her aunt a note thanking her for the present.

Dear Aunt Isabel,

I had a great birthday. We had a barbeque and everyone from the neighborhood came. I wish you could have been there. Thank you for the money you sent. I used it to take a friend to see *King Kong* at the movies. You should go see it. I think you would like it. I hope to see you soon.

Love,
Maria

When you are sending a letter to a cousin or an e-mail to your friend, you are writing a personal message. Start off with a friendly **greeting**, such as *Dear* or *Hello*, followed by the person's name. After you have written your message, end with a **closing**, such as *Love* or *Sincerely*. Write your name underneath the closing.

When you fill out a form or write a message, make sure to write neatly. Try to spell all of the words correctly. Just as when you are speaking, if someone else can't understand your writing, you are wasting your time.

■ PRACTICE 4: Writing English

Read each sentence. Then read the answer choices that follow. Circle the letter of the answer that best completes the sentence.

1. At the doctor's office, Marcus has to _____. He writes down his name, address, phone number, and any medical problems he has had in the past. Then he signs his name.
 - a. make a list
 - b. fill out a form
 - c. write a personal message
2. Jesse is planning a surprise party for her friend. She is having trouble remembering all the people who are coming. She needs to _____ of all the people who will be at the party.
 - a. make a list
 - b. fill out a form
 - c. write a personal message
3. Quentin is trying to get a job. He has to _____ with his name, address, Social Security number, where he went to school, and the other places he has worked.
 - a. make a list
 - b. fill out a form
 - c. write a personal message

4. Will has a pen pal in Germany. He decides that he will _____ telling his friend about the things that happened to him over the summer.
 - a. make a list
 - b. fill out a form
 - c. write a personal message

5. Arlene has a lot of things that she has to get done at work before she can go on vacation. She should _____ of everything that she needs to get done, so she doesn't forget anything.
 - a. make a list
 - b. fill out a form
 - c. write a personal message

Using Abbreviations

When reading, you may find an **abbreviation**. An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word. An abbreviation usually, but not always, ends with a period.

We often see abbreviations in front of or after a person's name. These abbreviations tell you something about that person. Here are some examples:

Mr. = Mister	Dr. = Doctor	Jr. = Junior
Mrs. = Mistress	Rev. = Reverend	Sr. = Senior

Other common abbreviations are found in addresses. For example:

St. = Street	Hwy. = Highway	E. = East
Rd. = Road	N. = North	W. = West
Cir. = Circle	S. = South	

Also, the days of the week and months of the year are often abbreviated.
For example:

Mon. = Monday	Jan. = January	Aug. = August
Tues. = Tuesday	Feb. = February	Sept. = September
Wed. = Wednesday	Mar. = March	Oct. = October
Thurs. = Thursday	Apr. = April	Nov. = November
Fri. = Friday	Jun. = June	Dec. = December
Sat. = Saturday	Jul. = July	
Sun. = Sunday		

TIP



Sometimes a piece of writing will use special abbreviations. A piece of writing like this usually has a guide in the front or back that explains what the special abbreviations mean.

One special kind of abbreviation is called an **acronym**. An acronym is a way of writing a very long name using only the first letters of the words that make up that name. For example, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration sends rockets into space. We usually call this agency NASA. Note that an acronym uses only capital letters. Here are some other examples:

IRS = Internal Revenue Service

NFL = National Football League

GM = General Motors

NATO = North Atlantic Treaty Organization

FEMA = Federal Emergency Management Agency

WWW = World Wide Web

■ PRACTICE 5: Using Abbreviations

Rewrite the following groups of words using one or more abbreviations.

1. August 14 _____
2. East Main Street _____
3. Doctor Lewis Smith, Junior _____

Rewrite the following names as acronyms.

4. Central Intelligence Agency _____
5. International Business Machines _____
6. National Education Association _____

Using a Dictionary

If you are reading and you find a word that you don't know, you can look it up in a **dictionary**. When you are writing, you can use a dictionary to help you spell a word. A dictionary is a book that lists words and explains what they mean. It is a tool that can help you with your English skills.

The words in a dictionary are listed in **alphabetical order**. This means that they appear in the same order that their first letters appear in the alphabet. If two words have the same first letter, then their second letter is used to figure out the order. If the first and second letters are the same, then the third letters are used, and so on. Here is an example of alphabetical order:

apple

banana

bean

berry

cantaloupe

■ PRACTICE 6: Using a Dictionary

Read the dictionary entry below. Then answer the questions that follow. Write your answers on the lines provided.

shift ('shift) *v.*—**1.** to move something from one place to another **2.** to change gears in a car **3.** to change direction

1. Would you find the word *shift* in the dictionary before or after the word *scout*? _____
2. Would you find the word *shift* in the dictionary before or after the word *shirt*? _____
3. What part of speech is the word *shift* in this dictionary entry?

4. Which meaning of the word *shift* makes the most sense in the following sentence?

The wind *shifted* from south to east. _____

5. Which meaning of the word *shift* makes the most sense in the following sentence?

Mary *shifted* from first to second gear. _____

■ IN REAL LIFE



There are many different types of dictionaries. A standard dictionary lists many of the words in one language, like English, and explains what the words mean. Other dictionaries list and explain words related to a single subject. Examples of these include legal, medical, and computer dictionaries. A dictionary may be a book. But you can also find many types of dictionaries on the Internet.