Looking ahead

In this unit you will have the opportunity to use the simple present tense to talk about every day (routine) activities at work and at home.

Vocabulary

- Words to enable you to talk about your daily routines.
- Work-related vocabulary.

Grammar

- Revision of the simple present tense.
1. Exchange impressions with a partner about the work of the people in the pictures. Where do you think they work? What do you think they are doing?

2. What is your job?

3. How does it compare with the work of the people above?
WORKING WITH SPEAKING 1

Introductions

Exercise 6.1 Getting to know each other

Examples

- My name’s John Smith. Smith is a very common English name like Brown.
- I’m Roberto Fernandez. I’m from Belgium. My father emigrated from Spain.
- I’m Begona Aguirre. This is a typical Basque name.
- I’m Asta Katiniene. I’m Lithuanian and as my husband’s last name is Katinas so I’m called Katiniene.

Now introduce yourself to the other members of the group and tell them about your name.

Exercise 6.2 Some personal information

Study the following examples and then ask a member of the group some questions to find some similar information. Then introduce the person to the group with some of this information.

1. Sharon Lee
- She works as an administrative assistant in a hospital.
- She’s a member of UNISON.
- She’s from Birmingham.
- She has a partner called Tony.
- She likes dancing.
- She doesn’t like fish.

2. Agnieska Sroka
- She works part-time as a teacher.
- She’s a member of the Polish teachers’ union, the ZNP. She’s married and she has two children.
- She likes folk music.
- She doesn’t like football.
3. Julio Montero

- He works as a full-time officer for Comisiones Obreras in Spain.
- He lives in Madrid.
- He’s not married. He has two brothers and a sister.
- He likes football.
- He doesn’t like loud music.

WORKING WITH LISTENING 1

Exercise 6.3 Sally’s routine

Listen to Sally describing her routine at work. Then answer the following questions:

1. What is Sally’s full-time job?
2. What does she make?
3. What is her union job?
4. Does she have many union colleagues?
5. How often is her work union-related?
6. What sort of benefits does she deal with?
7. What are the two most important problems she has had recently?
8. Why is she busy at home?

With a partner, discuss what you think of Sally’s working life. Could you recommend any ways to improve her situation?

Use expressions such as:

“I think Sally needs to...”
“Perhaps she should...”
“If I were her, I would...”
“What if she...”
“Maybe she could...”
WORKING WITH LANGUAGE 1

Revision of the Simple Present Tense

See Units 2 and 3 for a reminder of how this tense is formed and remember the following:

Note 1:
We need to put an extra s with he, she and it. This is very important! It only occurs with the simple present tense.

Note 2:
We use this form to describe routines and also to say where we are from (Example: I come from Newcastle in the north of England. Where do you come from?).

Note 3:
We use the continuous form of the present tense (“to be” plus the present participle “-ing”) when we describe activities that are taking place at the time we are speaking (Example: At the moment I am speaking in English and you are listening). See Unit 8.

Note 4
In the negative: we sometimes write do not and does not (with he, she and it) and we usually say don’t and doesn’t (with he, she and it).

Note 5:
To ask questions we use do and does (with he, she and it) (Example: Do you drink coffee? Does he like tea? No, I don’t, thank you.)

Exercise 6.4  The frequency of our activities

When we talk about routines we use some of the words in the box below to describe when we do something:

| never | sometimes | often | usually | always |

Complete the following sentences using the correct form of the present simple. Use each of these words twice only:

Example: We always attend (to attend) the union meetings.
1. I  ................... (to go) to the international meetings.
2. Riccardo  ............... (not-to write) reports.
3. They   .............. (to send) e-mails.
4. Jacky ........... (speak) three languages.
5. We ........... (to travel) by car.
6. You ........... (to fly) to Brussels.
8. Bernd ........... (to like) beer.
9. I ........... (not-to arrive) late for meetings.
10. Truus ........... (to go) to the cinema on Friday evening.

Exercise 6.5  Checking the records

Lisa, a part-time technician, is checking her records in the human resources office in the company where she works. Unfortunately some of the records are incorrect. A human resources administrative officer is reading the records to Lisa.

Example:
Admin. Officer: You work full-time? (part-time)
Lisa No, I don’t work full-time, I work part-time.

Note: Usually people give a short answer to this type of question; they usually say: No, I don’t or, Yes, I do.

Continue Lisa’s replies using the short forms.

Admin. Officer You earn £24,000 a year? (£16,000)
1. Lisa ____________________________

Admin. Officer You start at 8am every day? (6.30)
2. Lisa ____________________________

Admin. Officer You work as a machine operator? (Yes)
3. Lisa ____________________________

Admin. Officer You have 25 days holiday? (15)
4. Lisa ____________________________

Admin. Officer You take your main holidays in June? (Yes)
5. Lisa ____________________________
Exercise 6.6  True or false?

Which of the following statements are wrong (incorrect) or right (correct)? Correct them if necessary as shown in the example

Example:
- The ETUI office is in London. Wrong (or No), it’s in Brussels.
- Bratislava is the capital of Slovakia. Right, it is.

1. The EU has 27 members at the moment (2008).
2. Porto is the capital of Portugal.
3. In the UK a shop steward is a union representative.
4. Strikes are illegal in the UK.
5. LBAS is a Latvian confederation.
6. Large multinational companies with plants in Europe usually have European Works Councils.
7. Cars travel on the right-hand side of the road in Ireland.
8. A kilometre equals 5/8 of a mile.
9. When prices rise, inflation falls.
10. The meeting is next week.

Exercise 6.7

Make following statements into either questions or negatives as shown in the example:

Example:
- She goes to union meetings. (Question): Does she go to union meetings?
- They live in Budapest. (Negative): They don’t live in Budapest.

1. Jacques works full-time (question).
2. Eva speaks English (question).
3. I drink coffee (negative).
4. We work shifts (negative).
5. Siemens is a German company (question).
6. Giorgio writes reports in English (question).
7. They eat in the company canteen (question).
8. Ana and Tom play tennis (negative).
9. Margaret and I exchange e-mails (negative).
10. We are very busy (negative).
WORKING WITH SPEAKING 2

Word stress

In English each word is divided into syllables and one syllable in the word is always pronounced more strongly than the others. In a good dictionary this is usually indicated by a symbol. Here we will show the stressed (strong) syllable in **bold**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>possible</th>
<th>possibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>representative</td>
<td>representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negotiate</td>
<td>negotiation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exercise 6.8**

*Look at the following words, decide which is the stressed syllable and then practise the pronunciation with a partner.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>inform</th>
<th>information</th>
<th>responsible</th>
<th>responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cooperate</td>
<td>cooperation</td>
<td>industry</td>
<td>industrial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employer</td>
<td>employee</td>
<td>finance</td>
<td>financial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WORKING WITH READING 1

A day in the life of Betty, a union secretary in Slovenia

Exercise 6.9

Read the following summary of a day in the life of Betty to a colleague, remembering to stress the strong syllables, then answer the questions below the text.

I come to work at 7.00 am. The first thing, of course, is to switch the computer on. Most of my work is done with it: letters, e-mails, reports, minutes, materials, etc.

I usually arrive early as I need peace and quiet without telephones to check the e-mails and write answers and prepare everything for daily tasks. Then I write news articles and put them and all the other new information on our website.

After that I go to pick up the daily mail and while I check and sort it I drink my morning coffee. Then I start with daily tasks:

- prepare invoices and other financial documents;
- type minutes from the last meetings;
- prepare materials for future meetings;
- write reports;
- prepare materials for trade unionists from companies or regional organizations;
- answer telephone calls.
During the working day I attend meetings, where I take minutes.

At 11.00 or later I have my daily break.

After the break I continue with my work – it’s the same routine. If we have a meeting I prepare it. That means I prepare the meeting room, look after the participants and prepare some documents.

I usually finish work at 15.30 to 16.00.

1. **What do the following words in the text mean?**
   a. tasks
   b. invoices
   c. minutes
   d. (to) look after

2. **What do you think are Betty’s most important tasks?**

3. **What do you think of her working day?**

4. **How does it compare to your working day?**
## WORKING WITH WRITING 1

### Exercise 6.10  Your personal routine

*Now write some sentences in the table below about your daily routine. Here are some more verbs that might be useful.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Language 1</th>
<th>Language 2</th>
<th>Language 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to start</td>
<td>to study</td>
<td>to look at</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to talk</td>
<td>to prepare</td>
<td>to e-mail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to watch</td>
<td>to relax</td>
<td>to check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Morning</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Afternoon</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evening</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Now show your sentences to a colleague and ask each other questions about your daily routines*
WORKING WITH VOCABULARY 1

Strategies For learning vocabulary

Exercise 6.11  Use it or lose it!

What do you do when you find a new word? Do you make word lists? How do you organise new vocabulary?

Discuss with your colleagues how you deal with new vocabulary.

(See English for European trade unionists Introductory unit; Language learning strategies: Vocabulary pp. 12-27).

One useful method is to think about “word partners”.

For example, with the word shop

Workshop 1  where manufacturing takes place (machine shop assembly shop paint shop).

Workshop 2  a room where people work on art and crafts.

Workshop 3  a meeting for people involved in collective study or projects.

Shop floor  where the machines are located in a factory.

Shop floor workers  people involved in basic production.

Shop steward  person chosen by union members to represent workers in a particular area of the workplace.

Shop assistant  person who serves in a shop.

To talk shop  to talk about work-related matters.

Now see how many partners you can find for the word work.

You already have workshop and workplace!
WORKING WITH LISTENING 2

Exercise 6.12  Home life

*Listen to Bill Parkes, a union rep, as he talks about his home life and personal routine.*

*In pairs answer the following questions, and then compare answers with your own routines:*

1. Why is Bill busy at work?
2. Is he active in the union?
3. Does he have to start and finish work at the same time every day?
4. How does he travel to work?
5. Where does he have his lunch?
6. What time does he usually get home?
7. What does he like to watch on TV?
8. Why do you think he’s good at playing darts?
9. What does he do to help his wife at home?
10. What doesn’t he do to help his wife?

WORKING WITH READING 2

Exercise 6.13  A day in the life of Phyllis Thusi

*Read the following text about Phyllis Thusi, who is a member of the South African Transport and General Workers’ Union, then answer the questions that follow:*

I’m a cleaner and I earn ZAR 1636* a month. I get no benefits from my bosses- no bonus, pension or anything, I clean offices and we have to clean, dust, empty dustbins, clean windows and also the toilets. Most of us are women and the machines we use are heavy and make us sick. We have complained about these machines but the bosses say they can’t do anything.

Another problem we have at work is that when you return from maternity leave you usually find you have lost your job. Also if you go on holiday, when you return you find that your job has changed or you are sent to a different place. The supervisors also treat us badly. If you make a small mistake they fire you.
At work I’m a shop steward. I’m also the chairperson of the Johannesburg Cleaners. We cleaners have got many problems so we have our own separate meetings. Here we discuss our problems, share our suffering and try to find solutions. We then take our problems to the local union meeting. I’m very happy as chair of the cleaners. There are so many problems for cleaners and I like to help because I’ve been in the union for a long time. I joined the T&G in 1987 and became a shop steward in 1989. The T&G was the first union I ever joined in my life.

I live at home with my mother, brother, niece and my three kids. I’m a divorcee. My township is White City Jabavu in Soweto.

1 EUR = 13.04 ZAR  1 ZAR = 0.077 EUR (January 2009)

1. What type of work does Phyllis do?
2. What is her pay per month?
3. Does she get any additional pay?
4. What is the problem with the machinery?
5. What happens when women return from holiday?
6. What is the attitude of the supervisors towards the workers?
7. What union responsibilities does she have?
8. How long has she been a union member?
9. What are her domestic circumstances?
10. What do you feel about her life?

WORKING WITH SPEAKING 3

Asking for explanations and repetitions

If you don’t understand you must tell the speaker:

- Sorry?
- I’m sorry, I don’t understand
- Could you say that again, please?
- Could you repeat that please?
- Could you speak more slowly, please?
- Could you write that please?
- How do you spell that please?

Exercise 6.14

With a colleague, explain what you do at work and use some of the above expressions to make sure that you both understand each other.
**WORKING WITH VOCABULARY 2**

**Exercise 6.15  Work-related vocabulary**

*In pairs, put the following words into the most appropriate of the four group headings listed below. An example for each is given. Some words may go under more than one group heading.*

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>employee</td>
<td>overtime</td>
<td>workforce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permanent contract</td>
<td>to sack</td>
<td>minimum wage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wages</td>
<td>health &amp; safety rep</td>
<td>to make redundant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breaks</td>
<td>short-term contract</td>
<td>working conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to dismiss</td>
<td>paid holidays</td>
<td>part-time work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue-collar worker</td>
<td>shift work</td>
<td>salary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexitime</td>
<td>skilled worker</td>
<td>shop steward</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unpaid leave</td>
<td>bonus pay</td>
<td>to take on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>redundancy pay</td>
<td>to employ</td>
<td>occupational pension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full-time work</td>
<td>to lay off</td>
<td>trade union officer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Terms of employment</th>
<th>Payment</th>
<th>Hiring and firing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>employee</td>
<td>shift work</td>
<td>overtime</td>
<td>to employ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exercise 6.16 Vocabulary building

*From the vocabulary above, find words or phrases with opposite meanings to the following as shown in the example:*

**Example**

to take on  
to lay off to / to make redundant

| 1. part-time work |  |
| 2. permanent contract |  |
| 3. to sack |  |
| 4. paid holidays |  |

*Can you add any other words that relate to employment contracts?*

Exercise 6.17 Gap-filling

*Fill in the gaps with an appropriate word or phrase from the work-related vocabulary above as shown in the example:*

It’s a good idea to have **breaks** from time to time

1. The agreement makes provision for .......... holidays.
2. The local factory is doing well so it will probably .......... more workers.
3. When her children started school she changed from .......... work to .......... work.
4. To protect jobs, the union decided to ban ..........
5. At midday the workers take their .......... in the canteen
6. Because of a decrease in orders the company has started to ..........workers.
7. There is a dispute because the company refuses to pay above the .......... .
8. The Post Office is very busy at Christmas but they don’t employ workers on ................. contracts.
9. To complete the order in time the company agreed to give ............. .
10. It is difficult to compare ................. in different countries.
WORKING WITH SPEAKING 4

Exercise 6.18  The problems of part-time work

An increasing number of people, both men and women, work part-time today.

*Study the points below, which give some of the disadvantages and problems of part-time work. List them in order of priority beginning with the most serious problem. Then compare and discuss your list with a partner.*

- Many part-timers work unsociable hours.
- Many part-time workers do not think union membership is important.
- Part-timers often have little contact with each other and the rest of the workforce.
- Many part-timers are on temporary contracts.
- When there are problems the part-time workers often lose their jobs first.
- Management often reduces the hours of part-timers without consultation.

WORKING WITH READING 3

Exercise 6.19  The case for work-life balance

*Read the following text and then answer the questions below.*

During the 1980s and ‘90s flexibility was usually used as a (1) *substitute* term by employers for longer hours, greater job (2) *insecurity* and less rights. However, in more recent times flexibility has become more worker-(3) *focused*. The changing working environment means that (4) *adopting* work-life balance policies bring benefits for employees and benefits for employers.

Working (5) *patterns* have changed drastically as workers in service industries - such as banks, insurance companies and supermarkets - increasingly have to be available to offer 24-hour services to the (6) *consumer*. Similarly, public sector workers are increasingly expected to provide services beyond the traditional 9am to 5pm day.
At the same time increasing numbers of women with young children are (7) in work. In the UK, two-thirds of families both parents now work outside the home, up from under (8) a half in the 1980s.

The elderly population is rising and this means that greater numbers of workers have (9) caring responsibilities. People also travel further to get to work, and journey times for many have increased significantly.

All of these factors add to the pressure on workers. This is produced by (10) juggling the demands of home and work and trying to fit more and more into the day. (www.unison.org)

Find words in the box below to replace the words in italics

| a. customer | b. systems | c. balancing |
| d. alternative | e. to look after others | f. 50% |
| g. taking on | h. uncertainty | i. in employment |
| j. oriented |

- Do you have a problem with work-life balance?
- How can work-life balance be improved?
- How do employers benefit if their employees enjoy a good work-life balance?

Exercise 6.20 How do you feel at work?

Divide the following into positive and negative feelings and then select three that apply to you. Explain your choice to a colleague

| undervalued | appreciated | trusted |
| motivated | underpaid | overworked |
| stressed | praised | harassed |
| privileged | encouraged | frustrated |
WORKING WITH WRITING 2

Exercise 6.21 A personal introduction

Before coming to an English language training course, a participant wrote approximately 100 words about himself.

*Read his description and correct the few mistakes that he made (shown in italics). Then write your own personal introduction.*

I'm a 40 year-old married man and I have two daughters. I enjoy free time with my family and I have many hobbies. I like walk in the countryside and I like play tennis.

I work in the production department of a large car component factory. I have been an employer of this company for 18 years.

When I started to work I became a member of the trade union (the Metal Workers’ Trade Union). Ago ten years I was a member of the national commission for young members. I think improving my English is important because of share experiences with people from other countries which I can then use later in my trade union work.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

Study tour - our view of the local environment

*Visit a local town or village with a group of colleagues and prepare a poster to report back to the other members of the class.*

*After the visit each group prepares a poster to show to the other members of the course and each member of the group says at least one thing about the visit*

Examples of things you could include:

- Interesting buildings
- Tourist attractions
- People you meet
- Shops
- Cultural activities
- Words you see in English
- Unusual aspects of life in a different culture
Activity 2

Cultural Briefing

As a national group (or an individual if you are the only representative of your country/town/region) you have a maximum of 15 minutes to describe SOME aspects of your country/town/region.

You should prepare a poster or an overhead transparency to list the main points (and show any numbers/dates/key words). You may wish to make notes BUT you are advised NOT to read these word for word. Each member of the group must say something about at least one aspect of the presentation.

You have an additional 15 minutes to show pictures, play music, sing, dance, offer food/drink.

Suggested outline:

You may wish to include some (or all) of the following points:

- Location; borders with other countries
- Population: number of inhabitants, ethnic mix, languages
- History: but only two or three significant dates/events
- Economy: main sectors/employment
- Culture: festivals/customs
- Do’s and don’ts for visitors

Activity 3

Every picture tells a story

Work in a group to take photographs during the training course in order to prepare a short presentation on the final day. Each group needs to select no more than 12-15 of their pictures which they put together for their PPT presentation.

You may want to choose a theme such as study tours, people, unusual views, humour, culture or you may just want to present a mixed view of what you have seen. Each member of the group must say something about at least two of the chosen pictures.
Looking back

*In this unit you*

- heard about routines
- practised work-related vocabulary
- practised the use of the simple present tense

*You should now be able to*

- introduce yourself and other people
- describe your daily routine
- discuss working conditions
- introduce yourself