

Unit 8 • What's the time?

What's the time? It's seven o'clock. For a time between hours, 7:15 is a quarter past seven, 7:30 is half past seven and 7:45 is a quarter to eight. English 1AC Unit 8, What's the time?, connects clock expressions to a daily routine and helps you choose What, When and Where in simple questions.

Anglais 1AC - Supplementary practice - Updated 27/10/2026

Learning goals

- Ask for the time and answer with It's
- Read whole-hour, quarter-hour and half-hour times
- Distinguish past from to and digital from word forms
- Use at, in and on with familiar time expressions
- Read a short personal schedule for specific details
- Recognise sm, sn, st and sk at the beginning of words
- Write an ordered paragraph about a day using routine verbs

1. How do you ask and answer What's the time?

Asking for the time

What's the time? and What time is it? both ask for the current clock time. Answer with It's + time: It's eight o'clock. It's is the short form of it is.

Say Excuse me before asking someone you do not know: Excuse me, what time is it? A friendly answer is It's eight o'clock. The question asks for a clock time, while What time do you get up? asks for the time of a particular activity.

Question	Answer	What is requested?
What's the time?	It's seven o'clock.	The time now
What time do you get up?	I get up at seven.	The time of a routine activity
When do you read?	I read in the evening.	A time or part of the day

2. How do you say o'clock, quarter past and half past?



7:15 is a quarter past seven, 7:30 is half past seven and 7:45 is a quarter to eight.

Digital time	Word expression	Why?
07:00	seven o'clock	Exactly seven, with no minutes after it
07:15	a quarter past seven	Fifteen minutes after seven
07:30	half past seven	Thirty minutes after seven
07:45	a quarter to eight	Fifteen minutes before eight

A quarter is fifteen minutes because an hour has four quarters. Half an hour is thirty minutes. Past counts forward from the hour that has already begun. To counts the minutes remaining before the next hour. At 7:45, that next hour is eight.

Check this

Use o'clock only for an exact hour: seven o'clock, not seven thirty o'clock. At 7:45, say a quarter to eight, not a quarter to seven. Half past seven means 7:30.

3. Can you read the digital numbers instead?

Yes. 7:15 can be seven fifteen; 7:30 can be seven thirty; 7:45 can be seven forty-five. These forms and the past/to forms describe the same times. Use one clear form in your answer instead of combining them.

Read a time using past or to

1. Read the hour and minutes separately.
2. At :00, use the hour + o'clock.
3. Up to :30, count minutes past the displayed hour.
4. After :30, find how many minutes remain before the next hour.

5. At :45, say a quarter to the next hour.
6. Check by turning the words back into a digital time.

Work out 08:50

The display says 08:50. There are ten minutes left before nine.

1. The next hour is nine.
2. Sixty minus fifty leaves ten minutes.
3. Say It's ten to nine. You can also say It's eight fifty.

4. How do morning, afternoon, evening and night fit a day?

Expression	Example	Useful detail
in the morning	I have breakfast in the morning.	The earlier part of the day before noon
in the afternoon	I do homework in the afternoon.	The part after noon and before evening
in the evening	We have dinner in the evening.	The later part of the day
at night	I sleep at night.	Use at in this expression
at noon	The clock shows twelve at noon.	12:00 in the middle of the day
at midnight	Midnight begins a new day.	00:00 on a 24-hour clock

Morning, afternoon and evening do not all have one exact clock boundary in everyday speech. Add a specific time when precision matters. Seven in the morning is 07:00; seven in the evening is 19:00. Learn 12 noon and 12 midnight to avoid confusion around twelve.

5. When do you use at, in and on?

Preposition	Use here	Examples
at	A clock time and certain fixed phrases	at eight; at half past six; at night
in	A part of the day	in the morning; in the afternoon; in the evening
on	A named day	on Monday; on Friday morning

Compare I read in the morning with I read on Monday morning. Adding a named day changes the phrase to on. Use at in a full routine sentence: I go to bed at nine. An answer beginning It's gives the clock time directly: It's nine, without at.

6. Reading: how does Sami organise his day?



Add at before a clock time in a routine sentence: I do homework at half past four.

My name is Sami. On school days, I get up at seven in the morning. I have breakfast at half past seven. At eight, I go to school. I go home in the afternoon and do my homework at half past four. We have dinner at seven in the evening. I read a little, then go to bed at nine. On Sunday, my routine is different.

Sami's activity	Time in the text	24-hour form
get up	seven in the morning	07:00
have breakfast	half past seven	07:30
go to school	eight in the morning	08:00
do homework	half past four in the afternoon	16:30
have dinner	seven in the evening	19:00
go to bed	nine at night	21:00

This is Sami's invented schedule, not a rule for every pupil. The text gives six activity times but does not say exactly when he arrives home. To answer What time does Sami do homework?, use He does his homework at half past four. Notice does in the positive answer and do in the question after does.

7. What, When or Where: which question word do you need?



What asks about a thing or activity, When asks about time, and Where asks about a place.

Word	Asks about	Question and answer
What	A thing or activity	What do you do after school? I read.
What time	A clock time	What time do you read? At eight.
When	A time, day or period	When do you play chess? On Friday.
Where	A place	Where do you read? In the library.

Choose the word from the information missing. If the answer is a place, Where fits. If it is a clock reading, What time is a precise choice, and When may also be possible in a suitable context. Do not force a place answer into a time question.

8. Phonics: how do you practise sm, sn, st and sk?

Blend	Examples	Short phrase
sm	smile, small	a small clock
sn	snake, snow	white snow
st	star, stop	a bright star
sk	skate, skip	skip a rope

Start directly with the s sound and move into the next consonant. Avoid adding a vowel before s or between the two consonants. Say smile, snow, stop and skip while a partner points to the matching spelling. Practise the beginnings first, then the complete words.

9. Writing: how do you describe your day in order?

Turn a schedule into a paragraph

1. Choose four or five activities from a real or invented day.
2. Put them in time order.
3. Use present simple verbs and add at before the clock times.
4. Add morning or evening when a time could be unclear.
5. Connect activities with then or after that.
6. Check go home, have breakfast and go to bed as complete phrases.

A short school-day paragraph

I get up at a quarter past seven. I have breakfast at half past seven. Then I go to school at eight. In the afternoon, I do my homework at five. I go to bed at nine in the evening.

1. Every time fits the order of the activities.
2. At introduces clock times; in introduces parts of the day.
3. Change the times to describe your own character accurately.

Partner challenge: write a digital time secretly. Say it using past or to while your partner writes the digits. Swap roles, then put three correct times into routine sentences. If a pair disagrees, check the next hour first: it is the common source of mistakes with to.

Remember

- Ask What's the time? or What time is it? Answer It's + time.
- Use o'clock for exact hours and a quarter for fifteen minutes.
- Past names minutes after the displayed hour; to counts toward the next hour.
- 7:15 is a quarter past seven, 7:30 is half past seven, and 7:45 is a quarter to eight.
- Say at seven, in the morning, on Monday and at night.
- Use What for an activity, What time for a clock time and Where for a place.

Practice - Try before checking

Answer in your notebook. Use evidence from the examples and check your sentences.

Exercise 1. Ask for the time

Write two different questions asking for the current time. Answer both for 09:00.

Exercise 2. Read exact hours

Write 06:00, 10:00 and 12:00 in words using o'clock.

Exercise 3. Match quarter and half hours

Match 07:15, 07:30 and 07:45 with half past seven, a quarter to eight and a quarter past seven.

Exercise 4. Write the digital time

Write digits for a quarter past nine, half past ten and a quarter to six.

Exercise 5. Read two challenging times

Say 08:50 and 06:40 using to, then give a digital-style spoken alternative.

Exercise 6. Choose at, in or on

Complete: ... seven; ... the evening; ... Monday; ... night; ... Friday morning.

Exercise 7. Correct the time sentences

Correct: It's seven thirty o'clock. I get up in seven. 7:45 is a quarter to seven.

Exercise 8. Read Sami's schedule

Use the reading. When does Sami have breakfast, do homework and go to bed? Give the 24-hour forms.

Exercise 9. Know what the text does not say

Does Sami go to bed before dinner? What exact time does he arrive home? Use only the text.

Exercise 10. Choose the question word

Use What, What time or Where once each: ... do you read? In the library. ... do you have dinner? At seven. ... do you do at night? I sleep.

Exercise 11. Group the beginning sounds

Sort small, snake, star, skip, smile, snow, stop and skate into sm, sn, st and sk.

Exercise 12. Listen and record times

Have a partner read twice: I get up at a quarter past seven. I leave at a quarter to eight. I read at half past five in the afternoon. Write the three times in digits.

Exercise 13. Write about your day

Write six sentences in time order. Use two past/to expressions, one part of the day and then. You may invent the schedule.

Exercise 14. Interview a partner

Write three questions about your partner's day, using What, When and Where. Provide suitable model answers.



Explained answers

Exercise 1. Ask for the time

What's the time? What time is it? Answer: It's nine o'clock. Both questions ask for the time now and both can use the same answer.

Exercise 2. Read exact hours

Six o'clock; ten o'clock; twelve o'clock. The minutes are :00 in all three examples, so o'clock is appropriate.

Exercise 3. Match quarter and half hours

07:15 is a quarter past seven. 07:30 is half past seven. 07:45 is a quarter to eight because only fifteen minutes remain before eight.

Exercise 4. Write the digital time

09:15, 10:30 and 05:45 on a 12-hour reading. The last expression looks ahead to six; the displayed hour is still five. Add context if morning or evening matters.

Exercise 5. Read two challenging times

08:50: ten to nine, or eight fifty. 06:40: twenty to seven, or six forty. Subtract the minutes from sixty and name the next hour for the to form.

Exercise 6. Choose at, in or on

At seven; in the evening; on Monday; at night; on Friday morning. A named day takes on even when morning follows it.

Exercise 7. Correct the time sentences

It's seven thirty. I get up at seven. 7:45 is a quarter to eight. O'clock is for exact hours, at introduces a clock time, and to names the next hour.

Exercise 8. Read Sami's schedule

He has breakfast at 07:30, does homework at 16:30 and goes to bed at 21:00. Afternoon and evening context tells you when to add twelve hours.

Exercise 9. Know what the text does not say

No. He has dinner at seven in the evening and goes to bed at nine. His exact arrival-home time is not given; the text says only in the afternoon.

Exercise 10. Choose the question word

Where do you read? What time do you have dinner? What do you do at night? Place, clock time and activity clues guide the three choices.

Exercise 11. Group the beginning sounds

sm: small, smile. sn: snake, snow. st: star, stop. sk: skip, skate. Begin directly with s and pronounce the second consonant without an extra vowel.

Exercise 12. Listen and record times

07:15, 07:45 and 17:30. The phrase in the afternoon is essential for the last 24-hour form. This script is designed to be read aloud by a partner.

Exercise 13. Write about your day

Model: I get up at seven. I have breakfast at a quarter past seven. Then I go to school at eight. In the afternoon, I read at half past four. I have dinner at seven. I go to bed at nine. Check that the times agree with the order.

Exercise 14. Interview a partner

Model: What do you do after school? I play chess. When do you play? On Wednesday. Where do you play? In the library. Each answer must supply the type of information requested; other consistent routines are acceptable.

Frequently asked questions

How do I tell the time in English 1AC Unit 8?

Ask What's the time? Answer It's seven o'clock for 7:00, a quarter past seven for 7:15, half past seven for 7:30 and a quarter to eight for 7:45.

What is the difference between past and to?

Past counts minutes after the current hour: ten past eight is 8:10. To counts minutes before the next hour: ten to nine is 8:50.

When should I use o'clock?

Use o'clock for exact hours, such as seven o'clock. Do not add it after minutes: seven thirty and seven forty-five are correct on their own.

How do I write about my day in English?

Put routine activities in time order and add at before clock times: I get up at seven. Then I have breakfast at half past seven. Use in the morning, on Monday and at night correctly.

How do I choose What, When or Where?

What asks for a thing or activity, When asks about time, and Where asks about a place. What time is a precise way to ask for a clock time.

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