



Now and then: Where were you?

Inglés 1º de Nivel Básico A1

Enseñanzas
Oficiales de
Idiomas

Lesson

Now and then
Where were you?



Top tips

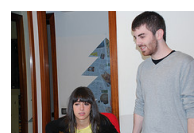
In this lesson you will:

- Learn how to express past time with the verb *be*.
- Learn how to tell dates.
- Learn how to say ordinal numbers.
- Learn about historical figures in History.



Focus on

AND NOW THE STORY CONTINUES...



Beatriz and Pablo meet after their classes at IEDA. Peter wants them to talk about a famous person in the past so they ask Emily for help.

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Do it yourself

Listen to Emily talking about famous people in the American culture. Below you have the portraits of those famous Americans. Write a number according to Emily's order. Number 0 is an example. You can hear the recording twice. For the audioscript, click on the button below.



☐ Clara Barton



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☐ Rosa Parks



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☐ Elizabeth Cady
Stanton



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☐ Maya Angelou



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☐ Abraham Lincoln

☐ Martin Luther King Jr.

☐ Neil Amstrong

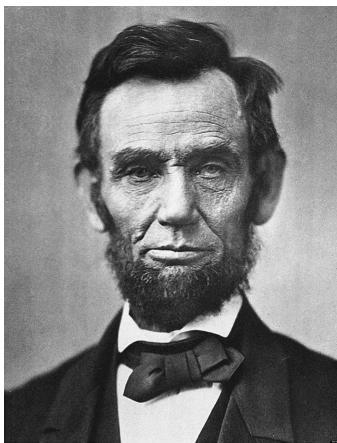


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It was probably impossible for you to understand everything in Emily's conversation but that's not a big deal¹. You don't need to understand everything when you listen to English, just the words or expressions that help you understand the general meaning of the message. It's true that there are other listening activities about getting² specific words but the purpose is different.

In this recording, you practice real life strategies. When people talk, you can understand half of the whole thing and for an A1 level that's great.

You can also check the audioscript by clicking on the button below:

[Audioscript](#) >> [Documento de descarga](#)

¹ = 'to be a big deal' means to be a big problem.

² = the verb 'get' has several meanings. One of them is 'to understand'. Emily uses it during her conversation and it is an informal expression.

1. That was history



Focus on

Can you remember your last weekend? Your last time on holidays? Your childhood?

Important events happen everyday in our lives and after a second... they belong to the past. They are history. So, when we want to talk about those events, we need to use a tense to express past time. This tense is called Simple Past (or Past Simple). In this Lesson, as an introduction, you will learn how to express past time with the verb *be*.



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Syntactically speaking, Simple Past works in the same way as the Simple Present, that is to say, there are three forms: affirmative, negative and interrogative. Let's remember the Simple Present with the three sentences below, one per form:

1. I am an English student.
2. She isn't her cousin.
3. Are they students at IEDA? Yes, they are.

As you can see, in the affirmative form, we place the subject (*I*, in the example) before the verb *be* (*'am'*). For the negative form, we add *'not'* or *'n't'* if we want to abbreviate it, as in the example. Finally, for the interrogative form, we place the verb *be* (*'Are'*) before the subject (*'they'*). The syntax for the Simple Past is the same. The

only difference between the Simple Present and the Simple Past is the words we use. Compare now the two charts below:

I	am	I HE SHE IT	was
HE SHE IT	is		
YOU WE THEY	are	YOU WE THEY	were

Imágenes de creación propia

Whereas in the Simple Present, there are three instances of the verb *be*, in Simple Past we only have two. That's simple! Check the sentences below. They are the three previous sentences but now they are in the Simple Past tense (with more information in parenthesis):

4. I was an English student (when I was in the UK in 1999).
5. She wasn't her cousin (but her grandmother).
6. Were they students at IEDA (last year)? Yes, they were. (They work now in a company in Almonte).

But when do we use the Simple Past? Well, we use this tense when we want to express past time (of course!), the action is finished and it belongs to the past. For example, imagine that you hear a sad piece of news. It was last Sunday, at lunch time. At that moment you were very sad because the piece of news was very sad. Some days later, your life continues and you study English, for instance, now, while you are reading this explanation. At this moment now, you don't remember that sad moment on Sunday. You are not sad anymore. You were sad on Sunday and that belongs to the past. Now, you are not sad. That action is finished and it belongs to the past.

In this sense, we can talk about people who are dead now. Their life is finished and they belong to the past. For instance:

7. Séneca was a philosopher who was born in old Andalucía when Romans were in Iberia.

Apart from using the verb *be* in the Simple Past tense (*was/were*), there are other ways to express past time. For example, with time references. For this level, you only need to know the two basic ones -expressions with 'last' and expressions with 'ago'.

Look at the following calendar. It's Peter's:

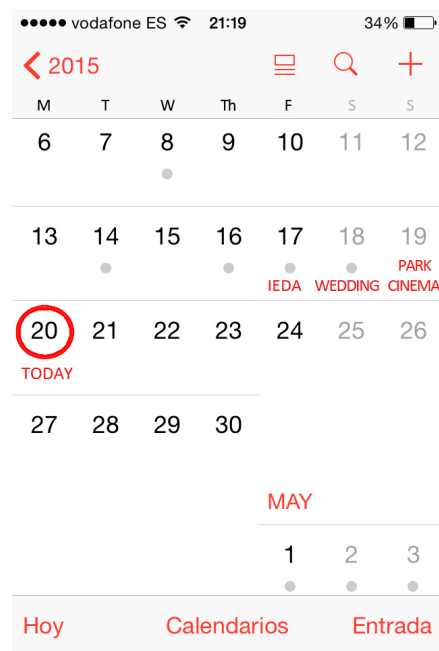


Imagen de creación propia

According to the calendar, today is Monday 20th. If you pay attention, Peter was at IEDA on Friday 17th. So, we can express that action in the past in two different ways:

8. Peter was at IEDA **last** Friday.

9. Peter was at IEDA three days **ago**.

As you can see, '*last*' goes before the time reference and '*ago*' goes after the time reference:



Imagen de creación propia

There are other time references to express past time. They are common words. For example, look at the words in **bold type** (they are sequenced in chronological order):

10. Peter was at the cinema **last night**.

11. Peter wasn't at home **yesterday**.

12. Peter was in the park **yesterday morning**.



13. Peter and Narumi were at a wedding **the day before yesterday**.

14. Peter's was free a **week ago**.

15. Peter's calendar was a mystery **two months ago**.

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Be careful! Sometimes Spanish speakers usually use the definite article '*the*' before '*last*'. And they create sentences like: '~~*The last weekend I was in El Ejido with my family*~~'. Although using '*the*' is not entirely incorrect, the meaning of the sentence is different. It's very subtle, but still different. Compare the two following situations:

16. We were in England for seventeen days. The first day, we were in London. The following day, we were in Bath. Then, the third day we [...] And finally, **the** last day (in our holidays), which was a Tuesday, we were back in London again.

17. I travel a lot because I am a flight attendant. Last Tuesday I was in Cardiff and now I am in California.

In number 16, the use of the article ('***the last day in our holidays***') means that the time reference belongs to a list of events, organised in chronological order whereas in number 17, '*Last Tuesday*' refers to the previous Tuesday in the previous week. There is no list but just a time reference.

That's a lot of theory, right? What about doing some exercises to check if you can remember all this information? Let's practice in the following section!

1.1. Practice: It was empty and now it's filled



Top tips

It's time now to practice!

In this section, you will first learn the differences between the forms of the verb *be* in Simple Past. You will also choose the right conjugation of the verb in this tense. After that, the last activity¹ will be about choosing the right tense, either Simple Present or Simple Past. Finally, in the last exercise you will put the words in order to make coherent and syntactically-correct sentences.

You had little knowledge about the Simple Past but not now!

¹ As you have learnt, we use the definite article 'the' and 'last' to mean a series of things. In this case, there is no reference to time but to the order of the exercises.



Do it yourself

Read the following sentences and choose the right form of the verb either 'was' or 'were'. Pay attention to the subjects.

1. My grandparents from France. She born in Nancy and he born in Éply.
2. I very sure about what film to choose last Saturday night so, eventually... No film!
3. Where you when your girlfriend at home?
4. Who the first President in Andalusia (in 1979)?
5. I don't understand. Bea here 5 minutes ago but now she isn't. Where is she?
6. Do you want to hear my story? Well, it very boring until her. She a nice change in my life.
7. My last books in good shape. My intention to sell them but it



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possible because they very old -some pages were missing!

8. The concert bad but the guitar horrible. Luckily, my friends with me so it was a lot of fun.

Well done. Sometimes it is difficult to remember that '*was*' goes with '*I*', '*he*', '*she*' and '*it*' (and the rest of possible third persons in singular). For the rest, use '*were*'.

Remember that we use Simple Past to refer to:

- Actions in the past which are finished.
- Actions that belong to the past.
- People who are dead.

If you have problems with sentence number 4, here is the explanation. Rafael Escuredo, who was the first President in Andalusia in 1979 (after the Spanish Constitution was approved), is not dead but we use Simple Past because the end of his presidency was in 1984, so it is a finished action that belong to the past.

1. My grandparents were from France. She was born in Nancy and he was born in Éply.
2. I wasn't very sure about what film to choose last Saturday night so, eventually... No film!
3. Where were you when your girlfriend was at home?
4. Who was the first President in Andalusia (in 1979)?
5. I don't understand. Bea was here 5 minutes ago but now she isn't. Where is she?
6. Do you want to hear my story? Well, it was very boring until her. She was a nice change in my life.
7. My last books weren't in good shape. My intention was to sell them but it wasn't possible because they were very old -some pages were missing!
8. The concert wasn't bad but the guitar was horrible. Luckily, my friends were with me so it was a lot of fun.



Do it yourself

Read the sentences below and decide if the right answer is in Simple Present or Simple Past. Then write the right form of the verb. Use contractions when possible.

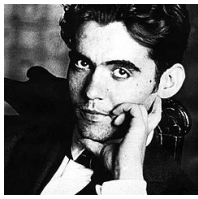


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1. Pablo usually active in English class.
2. Emily in the US last summer but not now.
3. Beatriz and Juan friends in August, before their classes at IEDA.
4. My sister and my brother tall and slim.
5. I at the supermarket at the moment.
6. In Fuente Vaqueros, on the 5th of June 1898, a future brilliant poet born.
7. I don't know when but I think the film Solas on² some years ago.
8. Ago an expression we use to talk about past time references.
9. My grandparents 85 and 82 years old. I love them very much.
10. My father very happy with my sister's decision to leave her dog with him last weekend. I agree with him -it her responsibility not his!

² to be on = it refers to a film, when it is available at the cinema and you can go and see it.

Here are some explanations about how to justify the right answers:

1. We have the adverb of frequency 'usually'. This means that the sentence is talking about habit or a routine, not a past action. That's why we use Simple Present.
2. We use the Simple Past here because we have two time references that indicate past time. The first one is '*last summer*' and the other one is '*not now*'.
3. This sentence needs Simple Past because we have a past time reference - '*in August*'. If you follow our story, you know that Juan and Beatriz meet at IEDA for the first time. They weren't friends before the course, whose beginning was in September.
4. In this sentence, we are describing the physical appearance of your relatives who are not dead. That's why we use Present Simple.
5. This is a clear example of Simple Present because the time reference '*at the moment*' refers to now.
6. This is an obvious reference to Federico García Lorca who is not alive anymore (a dead person in the past). You probably don't know about this poet's date of birth but you know that it is Simple Past because *to be born* is a finished action in the past.
7. The key here is the time expression '*some years ago*' which justifies the use of Simple Past.

8. Don't get confused. The word 'ago' here is not used as a time reference in the past but as a subject in an theoretical explanation about the Simple Past. As it is a universal truth (something which is always true, like any other definition) we use the Simple Present.
9. As these grandparents are still alive (pay attention to the second sentence, '*I love them very much*'), we use Simple Present.
10. For the first gap, we use Simple Past because there is a time reference that justifies the tense ('*last weekend*'). However, we use Simple Present in the second gap because, again, we refer to a universal truth.



Look at the following words. They are scrambled (not in order). Put them in order to make coherent complete sentences. When you finish, click on the button below to check your answers.

1. Pozoblanco / was / in / teacher / weekend / My / last
2. a / was / five / Marta / ago / man / years
3. Pablo, Beatriz and Juan / IEDA / year / not / at / were / last
4. ? / Marilyn Monroe / American / was
5. sunny / very cloudy / today / was / it / it / but / yesterday / today / is
6. ? / Celts / the / were / who
7. ? / British / the / weren't / Beatles
8. ? / while / how / outside / classroom/ you / in / many / the / were / were / students
9. Ken's / but / it / fault / my / was / not
10. ? / was / idea / it / whose



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1. My teacher was in Pozoblanco last weekend.
 - Although the time reference 'last weekend' usually goes at the end, it is also correct at the beginning if you add a comma after it: '*Last weekend, My teacher...*'
2. Marta was a man five years ago.
3. Pablo, Beatriz and Juan were not at IEDA last year.
 - Note that the order of names doesn't matter.

4. Was Marilyn Monroe American?
 5. It was very cloudy yesterday but today it is sunny.
 - '*cloudy*/'*very cloudy*' and '*sunny*/'*very sunny*' are interchangeable.
 - You can put '*today*' at the end of the sentences as well.
 6. Who were the Celts?
 7. Weren't the Beatles British?
 8. How many students were in the classroom while you were outside?
 - '*in the classroom*' and '*outside*' are interchangeable.
 9. It was not my fault but Ken's.
 10. Whose idea was it?
-

1.2. Practice: In Memoriam...



Culture counts



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It is common to hear that people in Andalusia don't like studying or working or that they only think of going to parties, singing or relaxing at the beach. Some people even say that Andalusians are lazy and that they never worry about anything different from flamenco or beer.

Well, when this happens it is sad to see how little History some people know and how much they like stereotypes because Andalusia is a land of philosophers, Nobel prizes, prestigious journalists and scientists or explorers who changed the world as we know it today.

To honor their contribution to humankind and to fight harmful stereotypes, you will be able now to learn a little about Andalusians who made History.

Olé!



Do it yourself

Match the pictures/photographs with the description of the historical figure. When you finish, check your answers and don't forget to click on 'Feedback' to learn more about these Andalusians.

PHILOSOPHERS AND THINKERS

1



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2



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3



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POLITICIANS AND ACTIVISTS

4

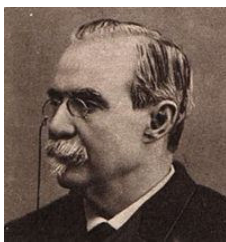


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5



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6



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SCIENTISTS

7



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8



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9



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ARTISTS AND WRITERS

10

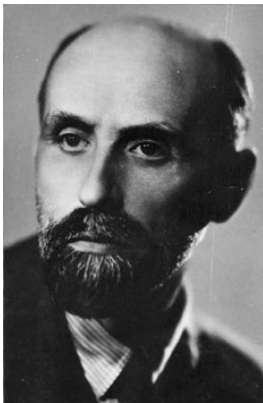


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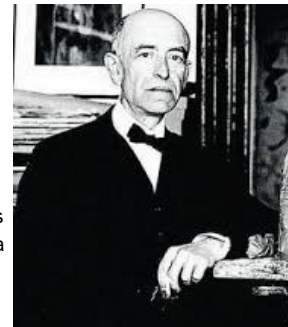


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☐ Manuel de Falla was a very prestigious composer in the 20th Century. He was born in Cádiz, in 1876.

☐ Francisco Suárez was a philosopher from Granada whose contributions were an inspiration for Descartes, Hume and Schopenhauer.

☐ María Zambrano was born in Vélez-Málaga (Málaga). She was an admired philosopher and an active thinker.

☐ Emilio Herrera Linares was born in Granada. Among other things, he was the scientist whose invention was the space suit.

☐ Adolfo Sánchez was born in Algeciras (Cádiz). He was an important philosopher who was in Mexico most of his life.

☐ Carmen de Burgos was a journalist from Rodalquilar (Almería). She was an activist for women's rights. Her nickname was 'Colombine'.

☐ Blas Infante was born in Casares (Málaga) in 1885. He was an activist whose contribution was the Andalusian anthem.

☐ Carlos Villarías was born in Córdoba. He was the first actor in a film as Dracula (1931).

☐ Antonio de Ulloa was a soldier and a scientist from Seville. He was born in 1716. The chemical element, Platinum (Pt), was his discovery in 1735.

☐ Juan Ramón Jiménez was born in Moguel (Huelva) in 1881. He was the author of *Platero y yo*. He was a Nobel Prize winner.

☐ Augusto Arcimís was born in Seville in 1844. He was the first meteorologist in Spain and his works were very famous in Italy and England.

☐ Antonio Cánovas del Castillo was born in Málaga in 1828. He was a powerful politician and the President of Spain.

☐ Lola Torres was from Jaén. She was musician and a researcher. Her contribution was *Cancionero popular de Jaén* (a study of the typical music in Jaén).

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Moving on

Impressed? If you want more information about these Andalusians from the past, check the following websites.

- [Francisco Suárez](#) (in English, for higher levels).
- [Emilio Herrera Linares](#) (in Spanish).
- [Carmen de Burgos y Seguí](#) (a video in Spanish).
- Blas Infante Pérez de Vargas (in [English](#) and in [Spanish](#)).
- [Antonio Cánovas del Castillo](#) (in Spanish).
- [María de los Dolores \(Lola\) Torres y Rodríguez de Gálvez](#) (in Spanish).
- [Antonio de Ulloa y de la Torre-Giralt](#) (in English, for higher levels).
- [Manuel María de los Dolores Falla y Matheu](#) (in Spanish).
- Carlos Villarías Llano (in [English](#) and a [video](#) in Spanish).
- [María Zambrano Alarcón](#) (in Spanish).
- Juan Ramón Jiménez (in [English](#), for higher levels, and in [Spanish](#)).

- [Augusto Arcimís Wehrle](#) (in Spanish).
- [Adolfo Sánchez Vázquez](#) (in Spanish).

This is just a selection but there are more. Why don't you search for more? You can prepare a monologue to deliver in class with your teacher.



Think of an important person in History. Look for information (place and year of birth, job and his or her contribution to History) about him/her on the Internet and write it down on a piece of paper.

Then, make questions about this information with the verb *be* in the past form and write them down.

Finally, ask your partner those questions and try to guess who your partner's historical figure is. Once you finish, answer your partner's questions.

2. The day you were born



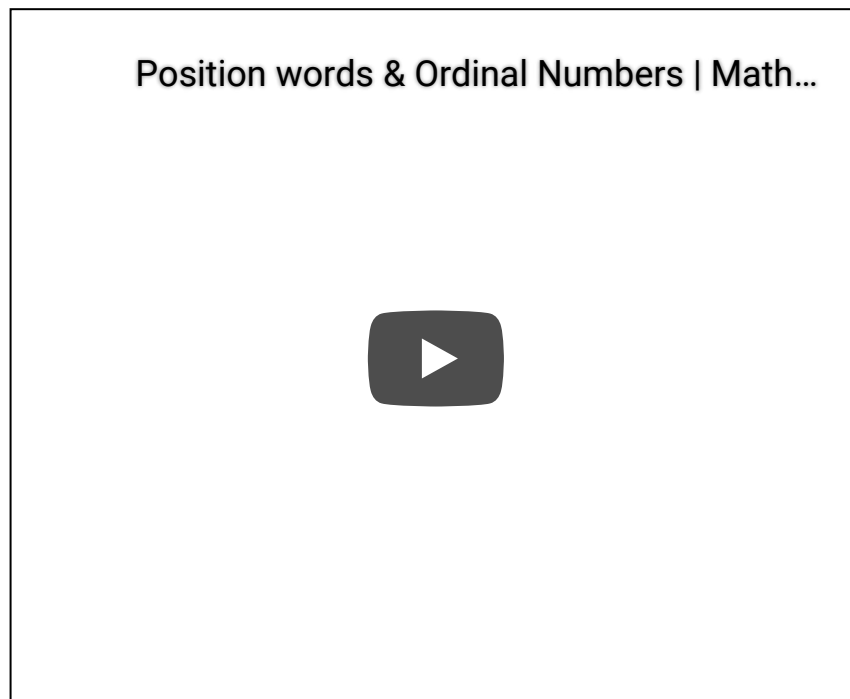
Top tips

In this section, you will learn how to express order with numbers and the singularities about how to spell ordinal numbers. In English, you need these numbers to say the date. You will also learn about how to say today's date and how to express a concrete time in the past here.



Do it yourself

An ordinal number refers to the order that something has in a series. Watch the following video and answer the questions below:



Vídeo alojado en [Youtube](#)

1. The theoretical difference between ordinal numbers and cardinal numbers is that we use ordinal numbers to answer the question 'How many?'.

☐ Verdadero ☐ Falso

Falso

The truth is that cardinal numbers answer the question 'How many?'. However, ordinal numbers refer to the position or order in a list.

2. We add th at the end of the ordinal numbers, for example 8th, because those are the last two letters of the word.

☐ Verdadero ☐ Falso

Verdadero

That's why, **first**, **second** and **third** are spelled 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

3. The ordinal number for nine includes letter 'e', that is to say, 'nineth'.

☐ Verdadero ☐ Falso

Falso

Not quite. The way that ordinal numbers are spelled has some exceptions and irregularities, as you will see later. 9th is 'ninth'.



Now look at Peter's whiteboard. Can you remember? This was the same whiteboard for cardinal numbers in *Unit 1. Getting to know each other, Lesson 2. Emily's home!* but this time, Peter uses it for the rest of ordinal numbers. Pay attention to the variations in spelling.

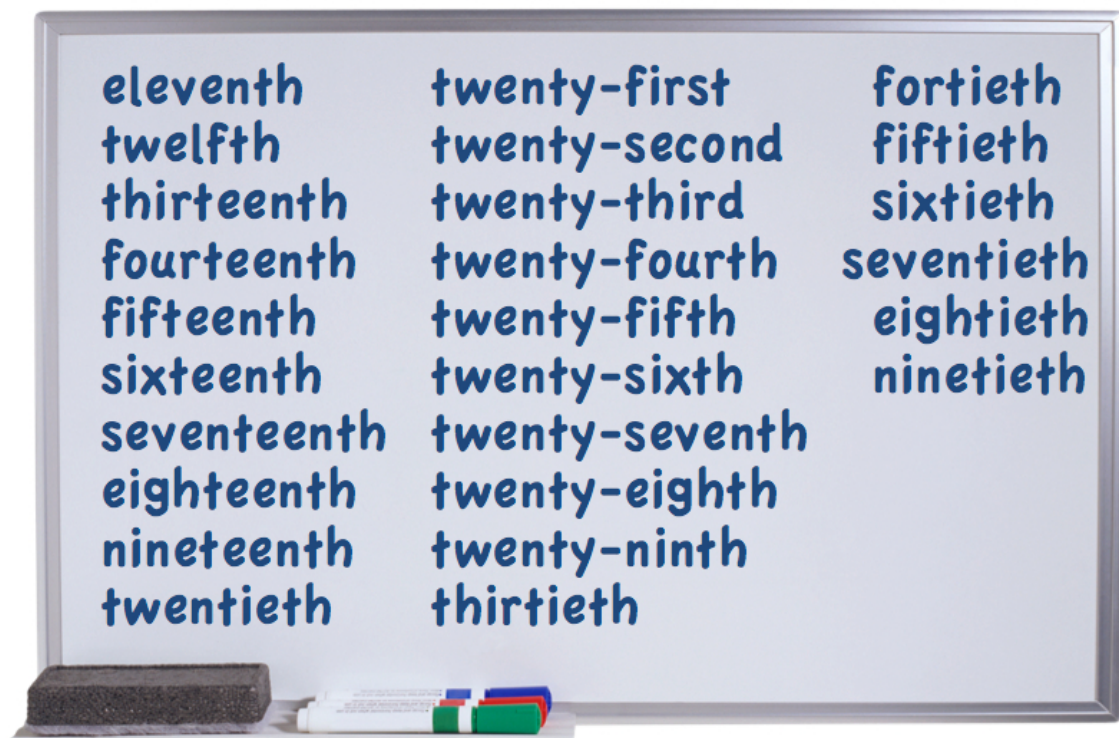


Imagen de creación propia

Now that you know the ordinal numbers and the months, it is important for you to know that when you want to say the date you need ordinal numbers. Look at the following video. You will learn how to express the dates in British English and American English. It is very useful because it says the date in Simple Present and Simple Past. When you finish, answer the following questions.



Vídeo alojado en [Youtube](#)



Do it yourself

1. How does a person from Cardiff express the date today?

 [Sugerencia](#)

- ☐ August 27th.
- ☐ 27th August.
- ☐ The 27 of August.

This is a correct answer but not for a person who speaks British English...

Well done. The day goes before the month in British English.

Isn't that a direct translation from Spanish? Check something more English... more... British?

Solución

- 1. Incorrecto
- 2. Opción correcta
- 3. Incorrecto

2. How does a person from New York City say the date?

- ☐ January 26th.
- ☐ 26th of January.
- ☐ 26th January.

Exactly! The month goes before the day in American English.

That would be a way to say it... somewhere else. Try another option ok?

If the person speaks British English that's correct but... maybe the answer is further West... across the Atlantic...

Solución

1. Opción correcta
2. Incorrecto
3. Incorrecto



There are several ways to ask for the date in English. Look at the following possibilities:

- What's the date today?
- What is it today?
- What day is it today?
- What date is it?

Choose the one you prefer the most and get ready because soon you will have some activities to do!

Saying the date in English can be chaotic. It's true that there is an attempt to standardise but it is very common to hear a lot of alternatives for the dates. Don't panic, here you will learn the most common expression and, probably, your teacher tells you a different way!

Today is Tuesday, the twenty-second of December, two thousand and fifteen

(Today is Tuesday, the 22nd of December, 2015)

If you pay attention, the date includes the definite article '*the*'. Don't forget to include it when you say the date. Maybe you don't need it when you write it (again, so many alternatives!) but it is a must when you say it orally.

But what happens if somebody asks for our birthday date? Then, we are not answering the question 'What date is it today?'. They want a



date different from today. So, in this case and others, we need to use the preposition 'on'. Look at the following sentences:

1. Peter's birthday is **on** the 5th of March.
2. Her birthday is **on** April 26th.

Yes, that's right. We also use the preposition 'on' when we say the date in American English. Are you thinking: *wait a moment, I remember that the preposition of time we use before months is 'in' not 'on'.* You are right! but pay attention. Look at the group of words between brackets:

3. Her birthday is on [April 26th].

The preposition 'on' refers to a whole **date**, including **month and day**. It does not only refer to the month. That's why we use 'on' for dates.

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Ready? Let's practice now in the following section. You are prepared to express dates in the past!

2.1. Practice: When was it?



Top tips



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Now it's time to practice those dates.

First, you will choose the correct option to some questions. Then, you will complete some gaps according to the information in the Calendars. After that, you will listen to a conversation between Pablo and Peter and, finally, you will have a speaking activity.

Don't leave it for tomorrow, do it today... or maybe tomorrow but *Save the date!*



Do it yourself

1. What's today?

- ☐ It's on the fifth of June.
- ☐ It's fiveth of June.
- ☐ It's the fifth of June.

Read the question again. You don't need that preposition 'on', right?

Hmmm, you are missing the definite article here '*the*' and that spelling doesn't seem to be correct.

Well done! Remember, we use the definite article '*the*' for dates and the spelling of five when it is an ordinal number changes a little.

Solución

1. Incorrecto
2. Incorrecto
3. Opción correcta

2. When's your birthday?

- ☐ It's on the 29th of February.
- ☐ It's on 29th of February.
- ☐ It's the 29th of February.

Correct! In this sentence we need the preposition '*on*' and the definite article '*the*'.

Almost! Aren't you missing something? Check THE sentences again...

That option sounds Spanish. You need a preposition, remember?

Solución

1. Opción correcta
2. Incorrecto
3. Incorrecto

3. When were you born?

- ☐ I was born in May 20th, 1975,
- ☐ I was born on the May 20th, 1975
- ☐ I was born on May 20th, 1975.

This is your option because you have the preposition '*in*' before the month. That is correct but here we need a different preposition because we have a whole date, not only a month.

Ok. Here you have the preposition '*on*' (well done!) and the definite article '*the*' but this is not the correct option. Why? Because this is the American way of saying the date so we don't need the definite article.

Awesome! Yes, this is the correct option because we have the preposition '*on*' for dates. There is no definite article '*the*' in the written form because it is American English. However, when you read it, it is like this: '*I was born on May **the** twentieth, nineteen seventy-five*'.

Solución

1. Incorrecto
2. Incorrecto
3. Opción correcta

4. When was the exam?

- ☐ It was three days ago.
- ☐ It was the fourteenth of June.
- ☐ It was the fourteen of June.

Correct! In this sentence, we have the verb '*be*' in the Simple Past and a time reference with '*ago*'.

Not quite. In this sentence we are missing the preposition 'on'.

That's a direct translation from Spanish. The sentence needs the preposition 'on' for dates and number 14 needs to be an ordinal number (14th or fourteenth) not a cardinal one.

Solución

1. Opción correcta
2. Incorrecto
3. Incorrecto

5. The sentence '*I was in Scotland on January 6th*' is correct because...

- ☐ The date is expressed in American English.
- ☐ No, it isn't. It isn't correct because the definite article '*the*' is not present.
- ☐ The ordinal number is expressed with the th at the end.

Correct! What? Do you think that American English is wrong? It is a variety of English as British English. Am.E. and Br.E. have the same importance and both are correct forms of English.

Not quite. It's true that you can't see it written but when you read the date you say the definite article right before the day: '*January the sixth*'.

Ok, that is partially true because this reason is not enough. This option is half-correct. Look at the other options to justify your answer fully.

Solución

1. Opción correcta
2. Incorrecto
3. Incorrecto



Do it yourself

Look at the images below and write the missing words (days, months, days of the week, prepositions and definite articles) by filling the gaps. Sometimes, you need to pay attention to the information in the context of the sentence. If you have to write an ordinal number, use letters not numbers.

A

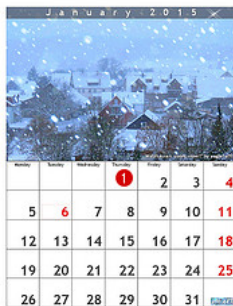


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B



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C



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CALENDAR A

1. New Year's Day is on first of January.
2. The 6th of is a holiday in Spain.
3. The last Saturday was the thirty-first of January.

CALENDAR B

4. In 2007, Independence Day was on a .
5. What was the date according to the mobile phone calendar? It was Monday, the of July, 2007.
6. Meetings and appointments have a small dot below the day. The last appointment was on the of July.

CALENDAR C

7. The four Sundays in November in 2012 were: the fourth, the , the and the .
8. The second Thursday in November, 2012 was the .
9. The Monday in November, 2012, was the nineteenth.

Special occasions

10. On the of February, some Americans celebrate President Abraham Lincoln's birthday. Two days later, it is St. Valentine's Day, on the fourteenth of February.
11. St. Patrick's Day is on the of March. It's a very special celebration in Ireland.
12. In the Anglo-Saxon culture and in most of the western countries, the first day of April is called April Fool's Day. In Spain this celebration takes place on the of December.
13. England celebrates St. George's Day on the of April because it is its patron.
14. People in the US celebrate the famous Cinco de Mayo, a festivity in honor of the Mexican culture. It happens on the of May, obviously, but Mexicans don't celebrate it in their country.
15. On the of September, people in the US celebrate Labor Day but Spanish people celebrate it on the first of May. It's a national holiday.

16. Halloween is on the of October. It's very popular worldwide.

17. Thanksgiving is an American festivity. It is on the fourth Thursday in November. Look at the calendar below. When was Thanksgiving in 2012? It was on the of November.

18. Boxing Day is a typical British celebration on the of December when friends meet to watch football on TV and drink some beers. It happens the day after Christmas Day.

In the Anglo-Saxon culture, specially in Britain, the week starts with Sunday, unlike Spanish calendars whose first day is Monday. It makes sense when you think about it: the beginning of the day starts when the sun rises so the week starts with the day of the sun, Sunday.



Do it yourself

Listen to Peter and Pablo talking about important days in the Anglo-Saxon culture. For questions 1 to 7, choose 'True' or 'False'. Number 0 is an example. You can hear the recording twice. For the audioscript, click on the button below.



0. Mother's Day depends on the country. True.

1. Americans celebrate Mother's Day on the 2nd Sunday in May.
2. In the US, Father's Day is on the third of June.
3. St. Patrick's Day is on March 19th.
4. Juan knows that the Spanish '*Día de la Hispanidad*' is on the 12th of October.
5. In America, October 12th is not '*Día de la Hispanidad*' but Columbus Day.
6. The fifteenth of November, people in England celebrate *San Juan*.
7. Veteran's Day is on the fourth of July.

Ok, you probably need some explanations for your possible mistakes.

2. Father's Day is on the third Sunday in June.

6. British people celebrate Bonfire Night. The format is the same (fires) but the origin is different.

7. Americans celebrate Veteran's Day on the eleventh of November.

You can also have a look at the audioscript below:

[Audioscript](#) >> [Documento de descarga](#)



Read the following questions below and write your own answers in a piece of paper (write the dates fully as it is explained [here](#)). Then, ask your partner those same questions and write down his or her answers. When you finish, check your spelling with your partner's answers.

- a. When were you born?
- b. When was the last public holiday in your country?
- c. When was your last holiday (abroad and in your country)?
- d. When was your last exam?
- e. When were your parents born?
- f. When was the first EOI born/created?
- g. When's your best friend's birthday?
- h. When does your course finish?
- i. When does summer start? And winter?
- j. When is your next appointment on your (mobile phone) calendar?



The first *Escuela Oficial de Idiomas* was created on the second of January, 1911 in Madrid. Its first name wasn't *Escuela Oficial de*

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Idiomas as it is today but *Escuela Central de Idiomas*.

Watch this interesting [video](#) in Spanish to learn more about *Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas* and their origin.

3. Revision



Moving on

TO FIND OUT MORE, GO TO...

A. [The Simple Past of the Verb "To Be"](#) by [My English Pages](#). This useful website includes:

1. Another explanation about the Simple Past of the verb *be*.
2. Some links to exercises at the end of the explanation.

B. [To Be - Past Tense - English Grammar Games](#) by [Woodward English](#). This online game will test your knowledge on the tense.

C. [Understanding dates - British and American English](#) by [Tesol Rich English](#). This video is about the differences between how British read dates and how Americans do it.

D. [Saying the year date in English](#) by [Tesol Rich English](#). The same teacher explains how to read years and say decades.

C. The following videos by [Rachel's English](#), are very useful to practice the pronunciation of dates:

1. [How to Pronounce ORDINAL NUMBERS -- American English](#).
2. [How to Pronounce the Months of the Year: American English](#).

E. [Our Fifty Most Popular Famous People](#) by [HistoryOrb.com](#). This website includes information about relevant figures from the past. Watch out! There is more verbs in the Simple Past than the verb *be*, so what about learning everything about this tense first in the following Lessons and then coming back to learn about these people?

Bite size



You've learnt how to express past time with the verb *be*.



You've learnt how to pronounce ordinal numbers and dates



You've learnt how to tell dates



You have reviewed how to ask questions with wh-words.



You've learnt about historical figures.

Printable version

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