

Uu

UK

- ✗ This is my first visit to UK.
- ✓ **This is my first visit to the UK.**

See note at THE 12

under

- ✗ Prices are not allowed to fall under this level.
- ✓ **Prices are not allowed to fall below this level.**

See note at BELOW 1

under-stand 1

- ✗ People find it difficult to understand about the Japanese.
- ✓ **People find it difficult to understand the Japanese.**

understand sb/sth (WITHOUT about): 'After twenty years of marriage, we still don't understand each other.'

2

- ✗ You have to know our culture in order to understand us deeply.
- ✓ **You have to know our culture in order to understand us properly.**

- ✓ **You have to know our culture in order to really understand us.**

- ✗ Reading helps us to understand the world more deeply.

- ✓ **Reading helps us to understand the world better.**

understand sb/sth properly/better; fully/really understand sb/sth (NOT deeply): 'Make sure that you understand the instructions properly before you begin.' 'Nobody fully understands how the drug actually works.'

Note the alternative: 'Reading helps us to develop our understanding of the world.'

3

- ✗ At first I wasn't understanding anything.

- ✓ **At first I didn't understand anything.**

See Language Note at CONTAIN

unemployment

- ✗ The unemployment is a serious problem in my country.

- ✓ **Unemployment is a serious problem in my country.**

See THE 4

uniform

- ✗ Every year we make new uniforms for the carnival.

- ✓ **Every year we make new costumes for the carnival.**

uniform = a set of clothes worn by soldiers, police officers, nurses etc when on duty, and children in some schools: 'Some children hate having to wear their school uniform.'

costume = a set of clothes worn by actors or public performers: 'She used to work for a theatre company; designing and making costumes.' 'The tourist guides at the castle all wear medieval costumes.'

- unique** ? It's one of the most unique pieces of architecture in Spain.
 ✓ **It's one of the most unusual pieces of architecture in Spain.**
Unique usually describes something that is the only one of its kind: 'Lennon will be remembered for his songs and for his unique sense of humour.'
 In informal styles **unique** is sometimes used with **more/most/rather etc.** to mean 'unusual': 'This rather unique little restaurant is very popular with the locals.' This use of **unique** is considered by careful users to be incorrect.
- United Kingdom** x I spent two months travelling around United Kingdom.
 ✓ **I spent two months travelling around the United Kingdom.**
 See note at THE 12
- United Nations** x The purpose of United Nations is to protect human rights.
 ✓ **The purpose of the United Nations is to protect human rights.**
 See note at THE 12
- United States** x I met people from Canada and United States.
 ✓ **I met people from Canada and the United States.**
 See note at THE 12
- university 1** x I am studying sociology at the London University.
 ✓ **I am studying sociology at London University.**
 x I am studying sociology at the University of London.
 ✓ **I am studying sociology at the University of London/Leeds University (WITHOUT the University of London/Leeds (WITH the**
 In formal written styles the usual form is 'the University of London'.
- 2 x After leaving school, we all went to the university.
 ✓ **After leaving school, we all went to university.**
 Users of American English would say: 'After graduating from high school, we all went to college.'
 See note at SCHOOL 1
- 3 x My sister is studying music in university.
 ✓ **My sister is studying music at university.**
 x I want to study Public Administration in the University of Southern California.
 ✓ **I want to study Public Administration at the University of Southern California.**
 See IN 5
- unknown** ? I don't like driving on unknown roads.
 ✓ **I don't like driving on unfamiliar roads.**
 ? The names on the list were unknown to me.
 ✓ **The names on the list were unfamiliar to me.**
unknown usually describes something that people in general do not know or know very little about: 'Whether or not there is life on any of these planets remains unknown.' 'There are still some unknown species of animals in the South American rainforests.'
 Something that you yourself have not seen, heard or experienced before

is **unfamiliar** (to you): 'The voice on the phone sounded unfamiliar.' 'It took Steven some time to get used to his unfamiliar surroundings.'

unless 1

- ✗ Bring something to eat unless you get hungry.
- ✓ **Bring something to eat in case you get hungry.**

When you are talking about something that is done as a precaution, use **in case** (NOT **unless**): 'You should take a book with you in case you have to wait.'

2

- ✗ We can go in my car unless if you prefer to walk.
- ✓ **We can go in my car unless you prefer to walk.**

Unless (= if ... not) is NOT used with **if**: 'That's all for today unless anyone has any questions.' 'Don't say anything unless you have to.'

3

- ✗ He won't go to sleep unless you will tell him a story.
- ✓ **He won't go to sleep unless you tell him story.**

See Language Note at WILL 4

unsatisfactory

- ✗ To tell you the truth, it's the most unsatisfactory job I've ever had.
- ✓ **To tell you the truth, it's the most unsatisfying job I've ever had.**

See note at SATISFACTORY

until 1

- ✗ The new tunnel means that we can drive until London.
- ✓ **The new tunnel means that we can drive (all the way) to London.**
- ✗ The magazine covers everything from politics until what's happening in Hollywood.
- ✓ **The magazine covers everything from politics to what's happening in Hollywood.**

Until and **till** are usually used in connection with time: 'The shops are open until six o'clock on weekdays.'

When you are talking about distance, area, or scope, use **to** or **as far as**: 'Do you know which bus goes to Marble Arch?' 'I got a lift as far as Sheffield and then I took a train.' 'You can get anything from a sandwich to a three-course meal.'

2

- ✗ The school caters for children until the age of eleven.
 - ✓ **The school caters for children up to the age of eleven.**
- up to** a particular age (NOT **until**): 'The competition is open to all children up to the age of eleven.'

3

- ✗ I will have finished this book until tomorrow.
- ✓ **I will have finished this book by tomorrow.**
- ✗ Could you let us know your decision until the end of October.
- ✓ **Could you let us know your decision by the end of October.**

Until is used for an action or state continuing up to a certain time: 'The shops are open until five thirty.' 'I'll wait here until you get back.'

By is used for an action which happens before or no later than a certain time: 'I have to submit my dissertation by the end of next year.'

- 4
- x I'll wait here until you will return.
 - ✓ **I'll wait here until you return.**
- See Language Note at WILL

- until now 1
- x Until now we have received over sixty applications.
 - ✓ **So far we have received over sixty applications.**
 - x I've only been here for two months until now.
 - ✓ **I've only been here for two months so far.**

When you are talking about a situation that is (probably) going to continue into the future, use **so far** or (in formal styles) **to date**: 'So far this week it's hardly stopped raining.' 'To date there have been ten attempts on the President's life.'

- 2
- x Her husband is alive until now.
 - ✓ **Her husband is still alive.**
 - ? Until now their customs and beliefs remain unchanged.
 - ✓ **To this day their customs and beliefs remain unchanged.**

When you want to say that something is the same now as it was in the past, use **still**: 'I've read the first chapter three times and I still don't understand it.' 'Despite her doctor's advice, she still eats anything she likes.'

To give emphasis to this meaning, especially at the beginning of a sentence, use **to this day ... (still)**: 'To this day I still don't understand why they got divorced.'

- 3
- x The letter hasn't arrived until now.
 - ✓ **The letter hasn't arrived yet.**

When you mean that up to the moment of speaking something has not happened, use **yet**: 'Her plane hasn't landed yet.'

- 4
- x It's the best hotel that I've stayed at until now.
 - ✓ **It's the best hotel that I've ever stayed at.**

When you mean 'at any time (in the past) up to the moment of speaking', use **ever**: 'This is the worst earthquake that the country has ever experienced.'

- unusual
- x It is not unusual that two families share the same house.
 - ✓ **It is not unusual for two families to share the same house.**
- See USUAL 1

upstairs See DOWNSTAIRS

- up-to-date
- x Italian women like to keep up with up-to-date fashions.
 - ✓ **Italian women like to keep up with the latest fashions.**
 - x Television also gives us the up-to-date news and information.
 - ✓ **Television also gives us the latest news and information.**

up-to-date (also up to date) = (1) (of machinery, equipment, methods, books etc) modern, especially because based on the most recent knowledge, information, inventions etc: 'Our computer system is reasonably up-to-date but it's not flexible enough.' 'This map is no good. I need one that's up-to-date.'

(2) (of people) having the most recent information about something: 'The aim of the survey is to find out how many doctors keep up to date with developments in medical research.'

latest = See note at LAST 4

USA

- ✗ I was travelling on a flight from USA to Paris.
 - ✓ **I was travelling on a flight from the USA to Paris.**
- See note at THE 12

use 1

- ✗ The meals we use to eat are very simple.
- ✓ **The meals we (usually) eat are very simple.**
- ✗ When I'm not busy, I use to play the guitar.
- ✓ **When I'm not busy, I (usually) play the guitar.**

When you are talking about a present habit, use the present simple tense (NOT **use to do**): 'I (usually) have two cups of coffee at breakfast.'

2

- ✗ In my previous job I use to travel a lot.
- ✓ **In my previous job I used to travel a lot.**

When you are talking about a past habit, use **used to do sth** (with silent d): 'Before I had the accident I used to cycle to work.'

3

- ✗ It took me a long time to get use to the local accent.
- ✓ **It took me a long time to get used to the local accent.**

be/get used to (doing) sth (with silent d) = be in or get into the habit of doing/hearing/seeing etc something, so that it no longer seems strange or difficult: 'Being a city girl, she wasn't used to sitting on a horse.' 'I didn't like the taste of the water at first, but I'm getting used to it.'

4

- ✗ On a beautiful day like today it's no use staying at home.
- ✓ **On a beautiful day like today there's no point in staying at home.**
- ✗ It's no use having lessons if you don't want to learn.
- ✓ **There's no point in having lessons if you don't want to learn.**

Use **it's no use/good doing sth** when you mean that a particular action will not help to deal with a need or difficulty: 'For spellings, it's no use looking in a grammar book. What you need is a dictionary.' When you mean that something has no useful purpose, use **there's no point in doing sth**: 'There's no point in having a dictionary if you never use it.'

5

- ✗ There's no use in waiting any longer.
- ✓ **There's no point in waiting any longer.**

it's no use ... (NOT there): 'It's no use complaining.'
there's no point ... (NOT it): 'There's no point in getting upset.'

used

- ✗ We soon got used to live in the countryside.
 - ✓ **We soon got used to living in the countryside.**
- See note at USE 3

useless 1

- ✗ In garage sales people get rid of their useless things.
- ✓ **In garage sales people get rid of the things they don't use.**

If something is **useless** it is not useful: 'These scissors are useless - they don't even cut paper.' 'The report contains a lot of useless information.'

2

- ✗ I don't like history because I think it's useless for me.
- ✓ **I don't like history because I think it's of no use to me.**

- ✗ Why do we have to learn useless words?
- ✓ **Why do we have to learn words that are of no use?**

If something does not help you to do what you want to do, it is **(of) no use (to you)**: 'I use my computer for writing and so a typewriter is of no use to me.' 'This map's no use - it doesn't show the minor roads.'

- 3**
- ✗ Staying in a big hotel would involve useless expense.
 - ✓ **Staying in a big hotel would involve unnecessary expense.**
 - ? Without all this useless packaging, food would be cheaper.
 - ✓ **Without all this unnecessary packaging, food would be cheaper.**

If something is not necessary, it is **unnecessary** (NOT **useless**): 'People who refuse to stop smoking are taking an unnecessary risk.' 'Sports that cause animals unnecessary suffering should be banned.'

usual 1

- ✗ In Finland it's usual that women go out to work.
- ✓ **In Finland it's usual for women to go out to work.**

it's usual/unusual (for sb) to do sth (NOT **that**): 'Is it usual for him to be so late?' 'It's very unusual to see these flowers at this time of the year.'

2

- ✗ I thought it was just a usual parcel but then it began to move across the table.
- ✓ **I thought it was just an ordinary parcel but then it began to move across the table.**



usual = that is usually used, seen, done etc: 'She was sitting in her usual chair by the fire.' 'We arranged to meet at the usual time.' 'He was speaking in his usual calm tone.'

ordinary = without any special features or qualities: 'It was just an ordinary house in an ordinary street.' 'From the moment I met her, I knew she was no ordinary kind of girl.'

usually

- ✗ As usually, he arrived five minutes late.
- ✓ **As usual, he arrived five minutes late.**
- ✗ The food wasn't the same as usually.
- ✓ **The food wasn't the same as usual.**

as usual (NOT **as usually**): 'John's late as usual.' 'As usual, everyone was out in the garden when I arrived.'

the same as usual (NOT ... **as usually**): 'Apart from his hair, he looked the same as usual.'

utterly

- ✗ I utterly hope you won't be angry with me.
- ✓ **I sincerely hope you won't be angry with me.**
- ✗ I have to make sure that our customers are utterly satisfied.
- ✓ **I have to make sure that our customers are completely satisfied.**

Utterly is usually used with words that have a negative meaning or express strong disapproval such as (adjectives) **ridiculous, absurd, irrelevant, useless, wrong, impossible**, (adjectival participles) **confused, amazed, dejected, ruined**, (verbs) **reject, detest, destroy**: 'This new tin opener is utterly useless.' 'The whole idea is utterly absurd.' 'I'm utterly amazed.' 'The entire building was utterly destroyed.'