



FREE RESOURCE · COMMON ENGLISH WORDS

Common English words 171 to 180

The ten words in this set (book, family, seem, let, again, kind, keep, hear, system, every) cover the family and education topics that come up again and again in IELTS Speaking and Writing. The mistakes are mostly about the word that follows: let me go, not let me to go, and every student has, not every students have.

The words

WORD	SOUND	MEANING	EXAMPLE
book noun, verb	/bʊk/	a set of pages with writing; as a verb, to arrange to have or use something in advance.	<i>Students can book a study room online through the library.</i>
family noun	/ 'fæməli/	a group of people related to each other, usually parents and children.	<i>In many countries, the extended family lives close together.</i>
seem verb	/si:m/	to give the impression of being or doing something.	<i>It seems that young people read less news in newspapers than their parents did.</i>
let verb	/let/	to allow someone to do something.	<i>Schools should let students choose some of their subjects.</i>
again adverb	/ə'gen/	one more time; as before.	<i>Many learners read a text again to check difficult words.</i>
kind noun, adjective	/kaɪnd/	as a noun, a type or sort; as an adjective, friendly and helpful.	<i>Many people enjoy this kind of work because it helps others.</i>
keep verb	/ki:p/	to continue to have or do something; to stay in a state.	<i>People who keep a diary often improve their writing.</i>
hear verb	/hɪə/	to notice a sound with your ears.	<i>I could hardly hear the speaker at the back of the hall.</i>
system noun	/ 'sɪstəm/	a set of parts or rules that work together.	<i>A good public transport system can reduce the number of cars.</i>
every determiner	/'evri/	each one of a group, without exception.	<i>Every student in the class has to give a short talk.</i>

Exercises

1. Please _____ me know if you cannot attend the meeting.
 - a. leave
 - b. let

- c. make
2. My parents never let me _____ late on school nights.
- a. stay up
 - b. to stay up
 - c. staying up
3. Find the mistake and write the right form: (1) Every (2) students (3) in the class (4) has a laptop.
4. Put the words in order (one or more words are not needed): the road / is closed / It seems / to / that
5. Correct this: *I listened a strange noise last night.*
6. She _____ the news on the radio this morning, but she was not really paying attention.
- a. listened
 - b. heard
 - c. hearing
7. Which word has the same vowel sound as book?
- a. took
 - b. bone
 - c. food
8. Which syllable is stressed in **system**? sys · tem
9. Her _____ to everyone made her a popular teacher.
- a. kindly
 - b. kind
 - c. kindness

Listening items (1) are online only and are not included in this list.

Practise online, free: hear every example and check your answers at www.ielts-laboratory.co/free-resources/common-english-words-171-180/practice/

IELTS tip. In Speaking Part 1, talk about your family with detail: say who is in it, one thing you do together and one thing that is special. In Writing Task 2, write the education system and the transport system as fixed noun phrases, with the before them.

FOR TEACHERS · COMMON ENGLISH WORDS

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AIM	Learners recognise, pronounce and use ten high-frequency words (book, family, seem, let, again, kind, keep, hear, system, every) accurately in IELTS-style sentences.
TIME	20 minutes
LEVEL	B1 to B2 (IELTS 5 to 6.5)
MATERIALS	This worksheet, one copy per learner; the free online practice for the audio

Warm-up

Learners tell a partner one thing their parents let them do as a child and one thing they never let them do. Listen for let + bare verb.

Lesson steps

1. Show the ten words on the board. Learners sort them into three groups: I use it, I know it but do not use it, I am not sure. Compare answers in pairs.
2. Use the Hear audio. Drill each word chorally, then individually, marking the stressed syllable. Pay attention to: the short /ʊ/ in book, the vowel in hear (/ɪə/) versus herd, and the stress in system.
3. Learners read the collocations and example sentences, then close the page and rebuild three collocations from memory. Check the watch-out notes together.
4. Learners complete the ten-item quiz alone, then explain to a partner why each wrong option is wrong.

Extension

Learners write six sentences about their own family, using seem, let, keep and every correctly, then read them to the class.

Answer key

1. b) let. Let me know is a fixed phrase meaning tell me. Leave and make do not form this phrase.
2. a) stay up. After let we use the bare verb, with no to and no -ing.
3. Part 2: *students* → **student**. Every takes a singular noun, which agrees with the singular verb has.
4. It seems that the road is closed. It seems that is followed by a full clause. The word to cannot be placed anywhere correctly.
5. I heard a strange noise last night. Heard fits a sound that reaches you without effort. Listen needs to, and it means paying attention on purpose, so both fixes are possible.
6. b) heard. Heard describes sounds that reach you; listened needs to and means careful attention.
7. a) took. Book and took both use the short /ʊ/. Food has /u:/, and bone has /əʊ/.
8. **SYS**tem. The stress falls on the first syllable: SYS-tem.

9. c) kindness. After her we need a noun, and the noun is kindness. Kind is an adjective and kindly is an adverb.

Questions learners often ask

What is the difference between hear and listen? Hear is automatic: sounds reach your ears. Listen is deliberate and needs to be before the thing you listen to, as in listen to the recording.

Do I say let me to go or let me go? Say let me go. After let, use the bare verb with no to.

How do I use every correctly? Use every with a singular noun and a singular verb: every child needs love. For a single word meaning ordinary, write everyday.

Sources

- Browne, C., Culligan, B. & Phillips, J. (2013). The New General Service List (NGSL) 1.2. newgeneralservicelist.com. CC BY-SA 4.0.
- Swan, M. (2016). Practical English Usage, 4th edition. Oxford University Press.

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