

FREE RESOURCE · COMMON ENGLISH WORDS

Common English words 261 to 270

The ten words in this set (learn, level, person, experience, once, member, enough, bad, city, night) belong to the people and places of IELTS Speaking topics. Typical errors are peoples for people, a work experience for work experience, and bad in maths for bad at maths. Each can be fixed with one small rule.

The words

WORD	SOUND	MEANING	EXAMPLE
learn verb	/lɜ:n/	to get knowledge or a skill by study or experience.	<i>Children learn a language faster when they hear it every day.</i>
level noun, adjective	/ˈlevl/	a position on a scale; a height; flat.	<i>The level of pollution in the city has fallen in recent years.</i>
person noun	/ˈpɜ:sn/	a human being as an individual.	<i>A person who reads regularly usually writes more clearly.</i>
experience noun, verb	/ɪk 'spɪəriəns/	knowledge from doing something; something that happens to you.	<i>Work experience can help graduates find a job faster.</i>
once adverb, conjunction	/wʌns/	one time; at some time in the past; as soon as.	<i>I go to the gym once a week to stay fit.</i>
member noun	/ˈmembə/	a person who belongs to a group.	<i>She is a member of the university swimming team.</i>
enough determiner, adverb	/ɪˈnʌf/	as much as is needed.	<i>Many teenagers do not sleep enough on school nights.</i>
bad adjective	/bæd/	not good; harmful.	<i>Too much screen time is bad for young children.</i>
city noun	/ˈsɪti/	a large and important town.	<i>Life in a big city is often faster than life in a small town.</i>
night noun	/naɪt/	the time when it is dark.	<i>Some people study better at night because it is quiet.</i>

Exercises

- Many _____ now work from home.
 - peoples
 - people
 - person

2. She has a lot of work _____ in marketing.
- a. experience
 - b. experiences
 - c. an experience
3. Is the room big _____ for six people?
- a. too
 - b. enough
 - c. enough for
4. Find the mistake and write the right form: (1) She is (2) a member (3) in (4) the swimming team.
5. Correct this: *He is very bad in mathematics.*
6. How is once pronounced?
- a. /ɒns/
 - b. /wʌns/
 - c. /wɒns/
7. Which syllable is stressed in **experience**? ex · pe · ri · ence
8. My teacher _____ me how to write a clear paragraph.
- a. studied
 - b. taught
 - c. learned
9. Not many tourists visit the _____ centre in winter.
- a. cities
 - b. citizen
 - c. city

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-261-270/practice/

IELTS tip. In Speaking Part 2, if you describe a city, add details with enough to and a lot of: There are enough parks for people to relax in. In Writing, use level in Task 1 to describe how high or low a figure is: the level of unemployment.

FOR TEACHERS · COMMON ENGLISH WORDS

Common English words 261 to 270

AIM	Learners recognise, pronounce and use ten high-frequency words (learn, level, person, experience, once, member, enough, bad, city, night) 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

Ask learners to describe the city they live in using three adjectives, then to say one thing they are bad at and one thing they are good at.

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 /ɜ:/ in learn, the stress in experience, and /wʌns/ in once.
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 tell a partner about one useful experience from school or work, using experience, learn, once and enough.

Answer key

1. b) people. The plural of person is people. Peoples means nations, and person is singular.
2. a) experience. Work experience is uncountable in this meaning, so there is no plural and no a.
3. b) enough. Enough follows the adjective big. The sentence already contains for after the blank.
4. Part 3: *in* → **of**. The fixed pattern is a member of a group.
5. He is very bad at mathematics. We say bad at a subject or skill.
6. b) /wʌns/. Once is said /wʌns/, starting with a w sound and with the vowel of cup.
7. ex**PE**rience. The main stress is on the second syllable: ex-PE-ri-ence.
8. b) taught. The teacher taught me. The student learned or studied.
9. c) city. City centre uses the singular noun city. Cities is plural, and a citizen is a person.

Questions learners often ask

What is the plural of person? The usual plural is people. Persons is formal and rare, and peoples means nations or ethnic groups.

Is experience countable? It can be both. Uncountable: I have a lot of experience. Countable: it was an exciting experience.

Do I say bad at or bad in? Say bad at a subject or skill, such as bad at maths. Use bad for to say something harms someone.

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.

Written by Will Salisbury · IELTS Laboratory · ielts-laboratory.co/free-resources/common-english-words-261-270 · Free to copy for classroom use.