



FREE RESOURCE · COMMON ENGLISH WORDS

Common English words 91 to 100

The common English words in this set are much, right, how, back, mean, even, may, here, many, such. Together they describe amounts, correctness, ways and possibilities, and are used constantly to give opinions and comparisons. Words like much, many and such, and modal verbs like may, help you write careful academic sentences in Writing Task 2.

The words

WORD	SOUND	MEANING	EXAMPLE
much determiner, adverb	/mʌtʃ/	A large amount. It is used with uncountable nouns, mostly in questions and negatives.	<i>There is not much public transport in the countryside.</i>
right adjective, noun, adverb	/raɪt/	Correct or true; the opposite of left; or something you are allowed to have (human rights).	<i>Everyone has the right to a good education.</i>
how adverb	/haʊ/	Asks about way, manner or degree; also begins an indirect question.	<i>Researchers are studying how children learn to read.</i>
back adverb, noun	/bæk/	Returning to an earlier place or state; also the rear part of the body.	<i>Back then, few families owned a car, so people walked to the shops.</i>
mean verb	/mi:n/	To have a particular meaning, or to intend to say something.	<i>Higher fuel prices mean that many families drive less.</i>
even adverb	/i:vn/	Used to stress that something is surprising or more than you expect (even the teacher). It is also used before comparatives (even more).	<i>Even small changes, like walking to work, can improve your health.</i>
may modal verb	/meɪ/	Shows that something is possible, or gives permission. It is more formal than can.	<i>Remote work may not suit everyone, because some people miss their colleagues.</i>
here adverb	/hɪə/	In or to the place where the speaker is.	<i>People who live here usually travel to the city by train.</i>
many determiner	/ˈmeni/	A large number of. It is used with plural countable nouns.	<i>Many young people now rent a flat instead of buying one.</i>
such determiner	/sʌtʃ/	Used to give an example (such as) or to make a noun stronger (such a long journey).	<i>Cities face problems such as noise, pollution and traffic.</i>

Exercises

1. There isn't _____ time left before the test.
a. many

- b. much
- c. few
2. How _____ students are there in your class?
- a. many
- b. much
- c. long
3. It was _____ a long journey that we stopped twice.
- a. such
- b. so
- c. very
4. Find the mistake and write the right form: (1) We stayed (2) indoors (3) even though (4) it was warm.
5. Which word sounds the same as 'here'?
- a. hair
- b. her
- c. hear
6. Put the words in order (one or more words are not needed): good / of / a / right / the / to / Everyone / has / education.
7. Correct this: *This may to cause problems.*
8. Which syllable is stressed in **even**? e · ven
9. I wonder how this machine _____ .
- a. works
- b. work
- c. does it work

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-91-100/practice/

IELTS tip. In Writing Task 2, 'such as' introduces examples neatly, and 'may' shows you are being careful instead of too strong. In Speaking, use many and much correctly with countable and uncountable nouns.

FOR TEACHERS · COMMON ENGLISH WORDS

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AIM	Students understand, pronounce and use the common English words much, right, how, back, mean, even, may, here, many, such, and avoid the typical mistakes noted for each word.
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

Write the ten words on the board in random order. Students say which ones they use most often in English and what they think each word does in a sentence.

Lesson steps

1. Present the ten words with their British IPA. Model each word, then students repeat chorally and in pairs, paying attention to weak forms and stress.
2. Students read the example sentences aloud, cover them, and make a new sentence about their own life with each word.
3. Students describe a problem in their city using many, much, such as and may.
4. Run the quiz as a class. For each wrong answer, ask the student to read the watch-out note and explain the rule in their own words.

Extension

Give students ten gap sentences with much/many/a lot of. They fill them and then check with a partner.

Answer key

1. b) much. Time is uncountable, so use much.
2. a) many. Students is countable, so use many.
3. a) such. Such goes before a/an + adjective + noun.
4. Part 3: *even thought* → **even though**. Even though means although.
5. c) hear. Here and hear are homophones.
6. Everyone has the right to a good education. The right to + noun.
7. This may cause problems. After may, use the base verb with no to.
8. **Even**. Even is stressed on the first syllable: E-ven.
9. a) works. In an indirect question, use normal order.

Questions learners often ask

What is the difference between much and many? Much is for uncountable nouns (much time) and many is for countable nouns (many people).

Is it maybe or may be? Maybe (one word) means perhaps. May be (two words) is a modal verb plus be, as in 'It may be true'.

How do I stop saying light instead of right? For /r/, pull your tongue back so it bunches, without the tip touching the roof of your mouth. For /l/, touch the ridge just behind your top teeth.

Sources

- Browne, C., Culligan, B. & Phillips, J. (2013). The New General Service List (NGSL) 1.2. newgeneralservicelist.com. CC BY-SA 4.0.
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