

Getting Around

Reading

1 Vocabulary: How long does it take you to get to work (or university)?

Complete the questions above with the words in the box.

close	late	trains
cycle	traffic	underground

1. It takes me 20 minutes on a good day, when there's not much _____.
2. It take about 40 minutes. I have to change _____ twice.
3. I _____ most days. It takes half an hour.
4. It only takes me 5 minutes. I can walk it. I live very _____.
5. It usually takes me about 20 minutes, but the bus isn't very reliable. It often comes _____.
6. It takes me half an hour if there are no problems on _____.

Now ask some other classmates How long does it take you to get to university? Try to use some of the expressions above in your answers.

2 Before you read

Make a list of the good and bad things about:

1. cycling to work or university
2. driving to work or university
3. using public transport to get to work or university

Compare your list with your classmates. Do you agree with all of their ideas? Which do you think is the best way to get to work or university? Why?

3 While you read

Read this text about getting to work and see if it mentions things you thought of.

It drives me mad!

I share a flat with a friend from work - Kate. She's a nice woman and we get on well, but there is one thing we always argue about: cars! She loves her car. She goes everywhere on it. She's even given it a name – she calls it Jenny! Every day Kate drives to work and I cycle. Kate thinks I'm mad. She says cycling is dangerous and dirty – you get all hot and sweaty – and she thinks it's hard and boring. Of course, the one thing she never says is it's slow. That's because every day she leaves the house 20 minutes before I do on my bike. Most days, though, we arrive at work around the same time, but quite often she arrives later than me, because the traffic lights weren't working or because there were road works or because of a car crash on the main road into town or because she couldn't find a parking space. I can always cycle past these traffic jams and problems, so it takes me more or less the same time every day. I guess it can be a bit dangerous sometimes, but only because there are so many cars, and anyway, I've never actually had an accident or fallen off my bike. And of course, cycling keeps me fit, which is why I'm still a size 10 and she's a 14, although Kate doesn't like it when I say it!

If I don't travel to places by bike, I prefer to go on the bus or the train. It's just more relaxing than going in the car. In the car, all you can do is listen to the radio or listen to music, but on public transport, you can read, listen to your mobile or watch videos, write notes, watch lots of different kinds of people, or just sleep! Anyway, the thing Kate and I have been arguing about most recently is the new charge car the council is going to introduce. They want to charge car drivers £5 a day to go into the town centre. That's £25 a week if you work there! They say this will stop people making journeys that they don't really need to make. It will make the streets safer, it'll make the city safer to walk in and it will cut pollution. Also, the council have promised to spend the money they make on improving public transport. I think it's a great idea. Kate, of course, is really angry about it. She calls it robbery and has said she's not going to pay it!

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4 Vocabulary focus

Match these verbs from the text with the nouns they collocate with.

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. listen to | a. public transport |
| 2. fall of | b. your mobile |
| 3. find | c. my bike |
| 4. improve | d. a parking space |
| 5. go on | e. at work |
| 6. share | f. the bus |
| 7. cut | g. a flat |
| 8. arrive | h. pollution |

Can you remember what the writer said about the eight things above?

5 Speaking

Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. What's the traffic like in your town or city?
2. Is there much pollution in your town or city?
3. Do you think introducing a £5 charge for drivers would help the situation? Why/Why not?
4. Can you think of any other ways to make things better?

6 Using grammar: comparatives

We often use comparatives when explaining decisions. For example:

A: Do you want to write him a quick e-mail?

B: No, I'll just phone him. It'll be quicker.

A: We should call an Uber now.

B: No, let's wait until after six. It'll be cheaper then.

Complete the answers with It'll be + comparative.

1. How shall we get there?
a. Let's get the bus. _____.
(cheap)
b. Let's get a taxi. _____.
(quick)
c. Let's walk _____ and it'll probably be as quick as the bus. (nice)
2. Do you want to go away this weekend?
a. No, let's stay here. _____.
(relaxing)
b. Yes. _____ than sitting around here, doing nothing. (exciting)
c. Yes. _____ than watching football all day Saturday! (good)
3. Where do you want to go on holiday in the summer?
a. Let's just go and see your family. _____.
(easy)
b. Let's go to England. _____
than here at that time of the year. (cool)
c. Let's wait till winter. _____
and it won't be as crowded. (cheap)

Now respond to these questions using It'll + comparative.

1. A: Do you want to get the train or shall we fly?
B: Let's _____.
2. A: Do you want to go out for dinner tonight or shall we cook something?
B: Let's _____.
3. A: Do you want to go to the cinema later or shall we just in and watch TV?
B: Let's _____.