

# 05 Making general statements

It is very useful to know how to start sentences with the word "it" in English. You can use "it is" at the beginning of a sentence to make a general statement about something.

-  **New language** Introductory “it”
-  **Vocabulary** Talents and abilities
-  **New skill** Expressing general truths

## 5.1 KEY LANGUAGE INTRODUCTORY “IT”

Certain set phrases beginning "it is" can be used at the start of a sentence. "It" is the subject of the sentence, and can be used to express a general truth or belief.



## 5.2 FURTHER EXAMPLES INTRODUCTORY "IT"



**It is important to be relaxed about making mistakes.**



**It is essential to give yourself time to study regularly.**



**It's true that being able to speak a second language is useful.**



**It's unlikely that** you will be comfortable speaking aloud at first.



**It is difficult to remember new words if you don't write them down.**





### 5.3 FILL IN THE GAPS USING THE WORDS IN THE PANEL

It's important to have the skills to communicate globally.

- With busy work and social lives, it's \_\_\_\_\_ most people have little time to study.
- Languages are so useful. It is \_\_\_\_\_ so few people learn a second language.
- Learning doesn't have to be expensive. It is not \_\_\_\_\_ spend a lot of money.
- Try internet study groups. It is \_\_\_\_\_ meet other language learners online.
- Don't worry if you need time. It's \_\_\_\_\_ you'll be able to speak fluently quickly.

easy to

a shame that

unlikely that

essential to

~~important to~~

true that



## 5.4 KEY LANGUAGE LEADING WITH AN INFINITIVE PHRASE

When you want to emphasize the contents of the infinitive clause, you can put it at the front of the sentence.

The construction with "it" at the start is much more common.

It is easy to begin learning.

To begin learning is easy! Keeping it going is harder.

Placing the infinitive clause at the start works particularly well with short sentences.



## 5.5 CROSS OUT THE INCORRECT WORDS IN EACH SENTENCE

It is worth working hard. **To / That / It** give up now would be a shame.

- 1 Remember, it's important **to / that / it** be relaxed about making mistakes.
- 2 With so many options, it's no longer difficult **to / that / it** find language courses online.
- 3 **To / That / It** take the exam now would be a waste of time. She hasn't studied at all.
- 4 **To / That / It** is unlikely that he will finish the class before the end of the year.
- 5 Don't give up! It's true **to / that / it** the more you study, the better you will become.





## 5.6 READ THE FORUM POSTS AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

Who is learning a language which involves clicking?

Alice  Dave  Mei  Sam

1 Who finds their language lessons a little boring?

Alice  Dave  Mei  Sam

2 Who can speak a number of different languages very well?

Alice  Dave  Mei  Sam

3 Who was encouraged to learn a language by someone else?

Alice  Dave  Mei  Sam

4 Who thinks they have a natural ability for learning languages?

Alice  Dave  Mei  Sam

5 Who is conducting research about learning languages?

Alice  Dave  Mei  Sam

The screenshot shows a web browser window for 'Lingo-net'. The header includes a logo of a speech bubble with horizontal lines, the text 'Lingo-net', and navigation links for 'ABOUT', 'NEWS', 'FORUM', and 'CONTACT'. Below the header, a blue banner asks 'ARE YOU A LANGUAGE LEARNER?'. Four forum posts are listed, each with a colored profile picture and a quote:

- Alice:** I'm working on a TV program and am looking for people to share language learning experiences. Do you have a hidden talent or even a complete inability to learn languages? Get in touch!
- Dave:** I'm trying to learn Native American Pawnee. I don't have any natural ability and most words have at least 10 syllables! The lessons drag on a bit but I'll keep on doing them until I'm fluent.
- Mei:** I think I have an aptitude for language-learning. I'm fluent in four languages. I'd love to learn Sentinelese but it's impossible because no-one knows what it sounds like!
- Sam:** I've only ever spoken English, but one of my professors has a remarkable capacity for languages and speaks Xhosa (a South African language with click sounds). He asked if I'd like to learn it, and I took him up on the offer. It's very difficult, but he's shown me some online videos to help.

Aa

## 5.7 FILL IN THE GAPS TO CREATE COLLOCATIONS USING THE PHRASES IN 5.6

I was never good at learning languages, but I discovered a **hidden talent** after I left school.

- I am surprised that my son **an aptitude** for copying accents.
- Unfortunately, I have a **inability** to remember vocabulary.
- Some people appear to have a **natural** to speak a number of languages.
- My father had a **remarkable** to memorize lists of words.



## 5.8 RESPOND TO THE AUDIO, SPEAKING OUT LOUD

Do you like learning new languages?

It isn't easy to learn a new language, but I find it a lot of fun.

1 Why do you think learning languages is important?

It is important to \_\_\_\_\_

2 What advice would you give to new learners?

It's best to \_\_\_\_\_

3 What is the hardest thing about learning languages?

It is difficult to \_\_\_\_\_

### 05 ✓ CHECKLIST

 Introductory "it"

 Aa Talents and abilities

 Expressing general truths

### ↻ REVIEW THE ENGLISH YOU HAVE LEARNED IN UNITS 1–5

NEW LANGUAGE	SAMPLE SENTENCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNIT
PRESENT TENSES	I usually <b>cycle</b> . Today I'm <b>walking</b> instead. I've just <b>started</b> a job. I've been <b>meeting</b> people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.1, 1.3
ACTION AND STATE VERBS	The chef <b>is tasting</b> his soup. This soup <b>tastes</b> disgusting!	<input type="checkbox"/>	2.1, 2.2
COLLOCATIONS	He has a <b>low opinion</b> of the film. There was <b>light rain</b> forecast today.	<input type="checkbox"/>	3.1
ADJECTIVE ORDER	What a <b>nice, friendly little</b> cat!	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.1, 4.3
INTRODUCTORY "IT"	<b>It is easy</b> to make mistakes in a new language.	<input type="checkbox"/>	5.1