

Unit 1

Language at work | Present simple | Frequency adverbs

Present simple review

Form

Positive: Add *-s* after the verb with *he / she / it*.

I / you / we / they work for Ford.

He / she / it works really well.

Negative: Use the auxiliary *do / does + not + verb*.

He doesn't work. I don't work.

Exceptions

1 The verb *be* is irregular: *I am, you / we / they are, he / she / it is, I'm not, you / we / they aren't, he / she / it isn't*.

2 Verbs ending in consonant + *-y* (e.g. *rely*), change the *-y* to an *-i* and add *-es*.

He / she / it relies on financial support.

3 Verbs ending in *-ch, -o, -s, -ch, -ss, and -x* (e.g. *reach*), add *-es*.

He / she / it reaches new levels every day.

Questions

1 With *be*, put *am / are / is* first.

Are you Swedish?

2 With all other verbs, use *do / does*.

Does it cost a lot?

3 With question words (*who, what, where, how, etc.*), add *do / does* to the question word.

Where does he work? How do they get to work?

4 If the question word is the subject, do not use *do / does*.

Who works for a multinational?

5 Indirect questions can start with expressions such as, *Can I ask ...?, Do you know ...?, Could you tell me ...?*

Use the same word order as for present simple statements.

Do you know where the report is?

6 For indirect *yes / no* questions, use *if* or *whether*.

Can I ask if / whether you have experience in accounting?

Use

1 To talk about facts or things which are generally true.

Lucia comes from Milan.

In Europe most people work in service industries.

2 To talk about repeated actions or events.

Every Monday we have a team meeting.

Frequency adverbs

Use adverbs of frequency (*never, always, sometimes, etc.*) to describe how often we do something.

1 With *be*, place the adverb after the verb.

I am never late for work.

2 With all other verbs, place the adverb before the verb.

I often work late.

3 Place *occasionally, sometimes, often, usually* at the beginning of a sentence to put a stronger focus on the frequency.

Sometimes I work at the weekend.

Unit 2

Language at work | Present simple and continuous

Present simple and continuous

Form

For the present simple, see Unit 1.

Present continuous positive: *am / is / are + -ing form*

Delia is emailing her business partner.

Present continuous negative: *am / is / are + not + -ing form*

Thomas isn't listening to me.

Questions

For the present simple questions, see Unit 1.

1 To make questions with the present continuous, put *am / is / are* before the subject.

How are you getting on?

Are you making progress with the report?

2 To give a short reply to *yes / no* questions in the present continuous, use the subject + *am / is / are*.

Are you making progress with the report?

Yes, I am. / No, I'm not.

Use

Use both the present simple and the present continuous to talk about the present in different situations.

| Present simple | Present continuous |
|--|---|
| To talk about situations that happen regularly. <i>In my job I speak to customers every day on the phone.</i> | To talk about situations happening at or around the time of speaking. <i>John can't help you at the moment, he is speaking to a client.</i> |
| To talk about permanent situations or facts. <i>I work for DHL.</i> | To talk about temporary situations or activities. <i>Belinda works at the Manchester office, but this month she is working with her colleagues in Liverpool.</i> |

Language tip

- 1 These verbs, known as state verbs, are rarely used in the present continuous, e.g. *know, believe, understand, like, love, forget, notice, remember, hate, want*.
- 2 Verbs like *think* or *feel* usually take the present simple but are used in the present continuous when they describe a mental activity.

You look angry. What are you thinking about?

Unit 3

Language at work | Past simple and present perfect

Past simple and present perfect

Form

Past simple:

verb + *-ed*

I worked here two years ago.

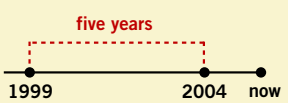
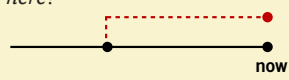

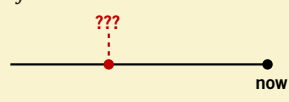
Present perfect:

has / have + past participle

I have worked here for five years.

Use

Use both the past simple and present perfect to talk about the past in different situations.

| Past simple | Present perfect |
|--|--|
| <p>To talk about actions or events that took place in a finished time period, e.g. <i>yesterday, last year, when I arrived.</i></p> <p><i>She worked here for five years, from 1999 to 2004.</i></p>  | <p>To talk about actions or events that took place in a time period that has not finished, e.g. <i>up to now, today, this year.</i></p> <p><i>We've manufactured this product for over three years.</i></p> <p><i>How long have you been here?</i></p>  |
| <p>To talk about finished actions or events when the speaker says, asks, or knows when something happened.</p> <p><i>I met him last Saturday.</i></p> <p><i>When did he leave?</i></p>  | <p>To talk about finished actions or events when the speaker does not say, ask, or know when it happened.</p> <p><i>We've already discussed this.</i></p> <p><i>I haven't seen him, I'm afraid.</i></p>  |
| | <p>To talk about very recently finished actions or events, with <i>just</i>.</p> <p><i>They've just got here.</i></p> |
| <p>Words we often use with the past simple are <i>yesterday, last week, last year, in 1999, three years ago.</i></p> | <p>Words we often use with the present perfect are <i>for, since, yet, just, never, recently, already.</i></p> |

For and since

Use *for* to talk about periods of time.

She's been here for hours.

I haven't played tennis for ages.

Use *since* to talk about a specific time.

This company has sold books since 1951.

We haven't met since that conference in Berlin, have we?

Language tip

Introduce a topic into a conversation with the present perfect, and use the past simple to ask for specific details.

A *Have you visited Sydney before?*

B *Yes, I have. I came here two years ago.*

A *So, did you visit the Opera House?*

B *Actually, no I didn't.*

Unit 4

Language at work | Comparative forms

Comparative forms

Form

- 1 Add *-er* to one- and some two-syllable adjectives and to adverbs with the same form as adjectives, e.g. *straight*, *fast*.

small → *smaller*

fast → *faster*

If the adjective or adverb ends in *-y*, change the *-y* to an *-i* and add *-er*.

happy → *happier*

- 2 Double the consonant after a vowel at the end of short adjectives.

hot → *hotter*

big → *bigger*

thin → *thinner*

- 3 Some adjectives are irregular.

good / well → *better*

bad / badly → *worse*

- 4 Add *more* to two- or more syllable adjectives and adverbs.

accurate → *more accurate*

quickly → *more quickly*

- 5 Add *than* after the comparative to compare two things.

Carole is more sociable than Vincent.

Use

- 1 Use the comparative to compare two or more things / people.

This new system is better than the old one.

- 2 To say something is the same, use *as* + adjective + *as*.

It's as accurate as the old system.

- 3 To say something is different, use *not as* + adjective + *as*.

It is not (isn't) as efficient as the old system.

- 4 Use *even* to make the comparative adjective more extreme and surprising. This sentence could suggest that the last boss was not very good.

The new boss is even better than the last one.

This sentence suggests that the last boss was good and surprisingly the new one is better. Therefore the new boss must be extremely good.

The new boss is even better than the last one.

- 5 Use intensifiers to emphasize the size of the comparison.

Sales are a great deal bigger this year than last year. (big difference)

There were nearly as many customers last night as there were here at Christmas. (small difference)

Small difference: *slightly, nearly as ... as, a little, marginally, a bit*

Big difference: *a great deal, not anything like as ... as, significantly, a lot, far, much*

For making comparisons with nouns, see Unit 10.

Unit 5

Language at work | Present simple and continuous for future use

Present simple and continuous for future use

Form

See Unit 1 and Unit 5.

Use

The present continuous and present simple can be used to talk about the future.

- 1 Use the present continuous to talk about a future arrangement that someone has made.

*We're **discussing** this again at the next meeting.*

- 2 Use the present simple to talk about scheduled or timetabled events.

*The gymnasium **opens** at 6.30 from Monday to Friday.*

- 3 Use the present simple after conjunctions of time, such as *after*, *as soon as*, *when*, *by the time*.

*I'll call you back **as soon as** she **leaves**.*

*We **can** take off **when** everyone is on the plane.*

- 4 We often use the present simple to talk about the future with verbs such as: *open*, *close*, *start*, *leave*, *arrive* and *depart*.

*The café **closes** at 5.00 p.m.*

Language tip

- 1 We usually use the present continuous for personal future arrangements and the present simple for official future arrangements.

*I'm **meeting** James for lunch tomorrow.*

*The annual general meeting **starts** at 9.00 a.m. tomorrow.*

- 2 We don't usually use state verbs, such as *be*, *believe*, *have* (for possession) and *need*, in continuous forms.

Do say: *I'm busy tomorrow.*

Don't say: *I'm ~~being busy~~ tomorrow.*

Unit 6

Language at work | Obligation, necessity, and prohibition

Obligation, necessity, and prohibition

Use

- 1 To talk about actions which are / aren't necessary, use *need to* / *don't need to* or *have to* / *don't have to*.
We need to / have to watch the share price carefully.
Back office staff don't need to / don't have to wear suits or ties.
- 2 To give an instruction that you think is important, use *must*.
You must save your files before closing your computer down.
- 3 To talk about an absence of obligation, use *don't* / *doesn't have to* / *need to*.
You don't have to / need to wear an ID badge.
- 4 To prohibit somebody from doing something, use *must not*.
You must not / mustn't leave the designated area.
- 5 To say / ask if something is / isn't prohibited, use *be allowed to* / *not be allowed to*.
Are we allowed to make personal calls from our workstations?
You aren't allowed to bring mobile phones into the lab.
- 6 To remind people about rules, or to talk about rules which aren't always observed, use *be supposed to* / *not be supposed to*.
I'm sorry, but you're not supposed to bring drinks in here.
We're supposed to park at the back of the building (but I often park at the front).

Form

- 1 *Must* has no past or future form. For the past and the future use *have to*.
He had to show his passport at the security desk.
You will have to switch all the computers off before leaving the office.
- 2 *Must* is rarely used in questions – use *have to*.
Does he have to lock up every day?
- 3 It is possible to use *need* as a modal auxiliary, especially in the negative.
You needn't go to the meeting this afternoon.

Language tip

Be careful with *must*, particularly when speaking with native speakers, as this can appear rude and even aggressive. *Have to* is more commonly used.

You have to work at least 35 hours each week.

Unit 7

Language at work | Present perfect simple and continuous | Connectors

Present perfect simple and continuous

Form

For the present perfect, see Unit 3.

Present perfect continuous

have / has + been + -ing form

I have been waiting for you for over an hour.

Use

1 Use the present perfect continuous for activities that began in the past and are still continuing, when you want to emphasize

- the activity itself

They've been developing a new product.

- the duration of the activity into the present time.

I've been saying we should do this since the project began!

2 Sometimes either the present perfect simple or the present perfect continuous can be used.

I've worked here for three years. ✓

I've been working here for three years. ✓

3 Use the present perfect simple to emphasize the result of an action, or the number of times it has occurred. Compare the following sentences.

Emphasis

I've chaired the team meeting three times. (number of times)

I've been sitting in this meeting all day. (duration)

I've just finished the report. (end result)

I've been working on the report. (action or event)

Language tip

Do not use the present perfect continuous with state verbs, such as *be, know, understand*, etc. (See Unit 2 for more on state verbs and the present continuous.)

Connectors

Use

1 Use the connectors *in order that, so that, because of*, and *due to* to explain the reason for something.

In order that / So that we can deal with your enquiry quickly, please give your reference number.

We need your reference number. It's because of / due to the security situation.

2 Use the connectors *so, therefore, as a result*, and *consequently* to explain the result of something.

We need more staff to complete the job. As a result / Therefore / Consequently, we've employed two more people.

We need more staff for this job, so we've employed two more people.

Language tip

In order that / So that often come before a modal verb.

I tried to finish the report quickly, so that I could prepare for the meeting.

Unit 8

Language at work | Talking about the future – *going to*, *will*, and *modal verbs*

going to

Form

am / is / are + going to + verb

I'm going to work late tonight.

Use

- 1 To talk about things we intend to do, or have already planned to do.

We're going to start a business together when we finish our training.

- 2 To make predictions based on what we can see now.

Watch out! You're going to hit your head on the door.

will

Form

will + verb

I think the new product will be successful.

Use

- 1 To talk about future facts.

Next year the call centre will be in Bangkok.

- 2 To talk about predictions.

The price of gold will continue to rise.

- 3 To make decisions / offers at the moment of speaking.

A Can I call for a taxi? I need to get to the airport.

B Don't do that. I'll drive you there myself.

- 4 To make promises.

I'll definitely finish it tomorrow.

Modal verbs: *might*, *could*, and *should*

Form

might / could / should + verb

The new offices should be really good when they are finished.

Use

- 1 Use *might* or *could* to talk about something that is possible, but not certain.

This clause in the contract might / could cause us problems later on.

- 2 Use *should* to talk about something that is expected to happen.

A Do you know when the next shuttle to the airport leaves?

B There should be one in a few minutes. They come every quarter of an hour.

Language tip

Be careful not to confuse the future use of *should* with *should* for advice.

You should lose weight and stop smoking.

Unit 9

Language at work | Reported speech

Reported speech

Form

1 Use a reporting verb (*say, tell, etc.*) + your own words. If the reporting verb is in the present tense, the tense of the original statement does not change.

'How old is the company?' → *He wants to know how old the company is.*

2 If the reporting verb is in the past tense, you can change the tense of the original statement. The following tenses often change in this way.

| Original statement | | Reported speech |
|--------------------|---|-----------------|
| present simple | → | past simple |
| present continuous | → | past continuous |
| past simple | → | past perfect |
| <i>can</i> | → | <i>could</i> |
| <i>will</i> | → | <i>would</i> |

'How old is this company?' → *He wanted to know how old the company was.*

'I can't work this weekend.' → *John told me he couldn't work this weekend.*

Use

1 Use *say* and *tell* to report statements. Use *say something (to someone)* or *tell someone something*.

'I'll find out about the order.' → *He said (to me) he would find out about the order.*
He told me he would find out about the order.

2 Use *ask* and *want to know* to report questions.

3 With *wh-* questions, do not use *do / does* in the reported question. Put the verb at the end of the sentence.

'Where does it come from?' → *He wants to know where it comes from.*

'What is Hannah's second name?' → *She asked what Hannah's second name was.*

Don't say: *She asked / wanted to know what was Hannah's second name.*

4 With *yes / no* questions, use *if / whether* after *ask / want to know*.

'Do you know my old boss?' → *She wanted to know if I knew her old boss.*

5 Use *ask someone to*, to report a request.

'Can you chase this up, please?' → *She asked me to chase it up.*

6 Use *tell someone to*, to report an order or instruction.

'Go and see if it has arrived.' → *He told me to go and see if it had arrived.*

Unit 10

Language at work | Nouns | Quantifiers

Nouns

Form

1 Nouns are either countable or uncountable. Countable nouns have a singular and plural form. Uncountable nouns have one form.

Countable nouns: *chair (chairs), employee (employees), computer (computers)*

Uncountable nouns: *time, money, information, coffee*

2 Most plural countable nouns end in -s but some are irregular.

man → men

child → children

Sometimes a speaker may make an uncountable noun countable.

Would you like a (cup of) coffee?

Language tip

Nouns that are countable in a lot of other languages are uncountable in English.

Do say: *accommodation*

Don't say: *an accommodation, accommodations*

Other examples: *information, advice, equipment, furniture*

Quantifiers

Use

1 Use *some, any, a lot of* with countable AND uncountable nouns.

There are a lot of employees in this factory.

There's a lot of money in my bank account.

2 Use *many* and *a few* ONLY with plural countable nouns.

How many employees are there? Only a few.

3 Use *much* and *a little* ONLY with uncountable nouns.

How much information do you have? Only a little.

4 *Any, much,* and *many* are mostly used in questions or negative statements.

How much money do you need?

Do you have any problems?

He doesn't do much work.

There aren't many employees in this company.

5 *Some* is mostly used in questions or positive statements.

Could you give me some help?

I've got some work for you to do.

6 *A lot of* can be used with questions, negative statements, and positive statements.

He gets / doesn't get a lot of support in his job.

Do you get a lot of emails every day?

7 To make a comparison with countable or uncountable nouns you can use *more*.

I need more time to work on this!

We need more clients!

8 To make the comparative of *little / not much* with uncountable nouns, use *less*.

My new boss has little time for my questions.

My boss has less time for my questions than my old boss.

9 To make the comparative of *few / not many* with countable nouns, use *fewer*.

The company doesn't deal with many clients.

The company deals with fewer clients than it would like.

Unit 11

Language at work | First conditional | Second conditional

First conditional

Form

if + present simple (= condition), *will* + verb (= result)

If we change our supplier, we'll reduce costs.

Use

- 1 To talk about events that might or might not happen and their results.

If they close the factory down, we'll have to look for another job.
(The factory might close down, but we don't know.)

- 2 Use the first conditional if you believe that the condition is likely or possible.

If I get a pay rise, I will buy a house. (You believe it is likely or possible that you will get a pay rise.)

Second conditional

Form

if + past simple (= condition), *would* / *might* / *could* + verb (= result)

If we changed our supplier, we would reduce costs.

Use

- 1 To talk about events that are less likely to happen.

If you wasted less time chatting on the phone, you would get more work done. (But I think you will continue to waste time.)

- 2 To talk about impossible or highly unlikely situations.

If I were taller, people would take me more seriously. (But I'll always be short.)

If I ran the company, I would make a lot of changes. (But I am just an eighteen-year-old office clerk.)

- 3 To talk about something hypothetical.

If we took over their company, we would have access to the South American market.

- 4 To be more polite, or achieve more 'social distance'.

What would you say if I asked you to be Managing Director?

Language tip

In second conditional sentences, we often use *were* instead of *was* after *if*. *Were* is more formal than *was*.

If I were the manager, I would improve working conditions.

If I was the manager, I would improve working conditions.

when, as soon as, and unless

- 1 We can use *unless* to mean *if not* or *except*.

They won't let you into the restaurant unless you're wearing a tie.

- 2 Use *when* / *as soon as* instead of *if*, to show you are sure that something will happen. Compare the following.

Liz will call me when the client arrives. (You are sure the client will arrive.)

Liz will call me as soon as the client arrives. (You are sure the client will arrive and when the client arrives, Liz will call you immediately.)

Liz will call me if the client arrives. (Maybe the client will arrive, but you are not sure.)

Unit 12

Language at work | Superlative forms

Superlative forms

Form

- 1 Add *-est* to one- and some two-syllable adjectives and to adverbs with the same forms as adjectives, e.g. *fast*, *straight*, *high*.
small → *smallest*
fast → *fastest*
- 2 If the adjective or adverb ends in *-y*, change the *-y* to an *-i* and add *-est*.
early → *earliest*
- 3 Double the consonant after a vowel at the end of short adjectives.
hot → *hottest*
big → *biggest*
thin → *thinnest*
- 4 Some adjectives and adverbs are irregular.
good / well → *best* *bad / badly* → *worst*
- 5 Add *most* to two- or more syllable adjectives and adverbs ending in *-ly* (except *early*).
accurate → *most accurate*
quickly → *most quickly*
- 6 Also add *most* to adjectives ending in *-ed*.
pleased → *most pleased*
tired → *most tired*
- 7 Don't use *most* with an *-est* superlative.
Do say: *She is **the best** boss in the company.*
Don't say: *She is ~~the most best~~ boss in the company.*
- 8 In most sentences, use *the* before the superlative.
Do say: *This is **the fastest** car on the road.*
Don't say: *This is ~~fastest~~ car on the road.*

Use

- 1 To describe the maximum or minimum.
*This has **the largest** memory of any laptop.*
- 2 To place something in a position after first place.
*We're **the second biggest** supplier in this market.*
- 3 Followed by the present perfect to describe our experience of something.
*It was **the worst** food I've ever tasted.*

Language tip

Don't use *the* in certain phrases.

Do say: *It's **best** to arrive early.*

Don't say: *It's ~~the best~~ to arrive early.*

Unit 13

Language at work | Advice and recommendation | *too* and *enough*

Advice and recommendation

Use

- 1 To give or ask for advice, use *should*.
*You **should** always make a backup copy of your files.*
*How do you think we **should** proceed?*
- 2 To introduce an option or possible course of action, use *could*.
*You **could** show them the factory first.*
- 3 To describe a less attractive option, use *could always*.
*We **could always** reduce our prices.*
- 4 To say that it would be fair or right for something to happen, use *should*.
*The company **should** dedicate more resources to quality control.*
- 5 To give your opinion, use *would*.
*If I were you, I **would** extend the guarantee.*
- 6 To criticize, use *should*.
*You **should** treat your computer more carefully.*
- 7 To give an instruction, use *have to*.
*You **have to** enter your password to access your emails.*

too and *enough*

Use

- 1 Use *too* before adjectives to say that something is more than good, more than necessary, more than is wanted, etc.
*This MP3 player is **too** expensive, customers will never buy it.*
- 2 Use *enough* before nouns to say that there is / isn't as much of something as necessary.
*We (don't) have **enough** time to make an intelligent decision.*
- 3 Use *enough* after verbs, adjectives, and adverbs to say something is sufficient / insufficient.
*She doesn't work **enough**. / It isn't warm **enough**. / He doesn't type quickly **enough**.*
- 4 Use *enough* as a pronoun, when a noun does not need to be repeated.
A Shall we get some more paper clips?
*B No. We've got **enough**.*

Language tip

Be careful not to confuse *very* and *too*.

*The restaurant was **very** expensive, but we enjoyed ourselves.*
*The restaurant was **too** expensive, it simply wasn't worth the money.*

Unit 14

Language at work | Passive forms

Passive forms

Form

Verbs in sentences can either be active or passive.

The passive is formed with the verb *be* + past participle of the main verb.

| Tense | Passive form | Active form |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Present simple | <i>The post is opened in the morning.</i> | <i>David opens the post in the morning.</i> |
| Present continuous | <i>The report is being written right now.</i> | <i>Christina is writing that report right now.</i> |
| Past simple | <i>I was given your name by a colleague.</i> | <i>Joe Langley gave me your name.</i> |
| Present perfect | <i>We've been asked to speak at the event.</i> | <i>The CEO has asked us to speak at the event.</i> |
| Modal | <i>It mustn't be changed in any way.</i> | <i>Nobody must change it in any way.</i> |

Use

- 1 To talk about processes or how something is done.
*First of all, the bottle **is washed** and sterilized. Next, it **is filled** ...*
- 2 To emphasize the result, rather than the person or cause.
*We **have been forced** to change our plans because ...*
- 3 When the person who does the action is unknown, unimportant, or too obvious to mention.
*Hello, I **was advised** to talk to you about purchasing ...*

Language tip

Passive forms tend to be written down more than they are spoken. For example, we often use passives in formal business writing, such as memos and reports.

*It **is recommended** that all staff arrange an appointment with their line managers.*

Unit 15

Language at work | Past continuous and past perfect

Past perfect

Form

had + past participle

Use

- 1 To say that one event happened before another completed past event.

*The meeting **had ended** when he arrived.*



- 2 The past perfect often appears in sentences with conjunctions, such as *when*, *by the time*, *because*, *so*. The other verb in the sentence is often in the past simple.

Other rules

Words often used with the present perfect are also often used with the past perfect. They are *for*, *since*, *yet*, *just*, *never*, *recently*, *already*.

*The email had **already** been sent when John noticed the mistake.*

Past continuous

Form

was / were + -ing form

Use

- 1 To talk about something in progress at a particular time in the past. It often appears with the past simple in the same sentence.

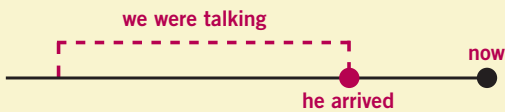
*We **were talking** when he arrived.*

Note that the past action might happen whilst the continuous action is in progress (a), or it might interrupt and stop the continuous action (b).

a

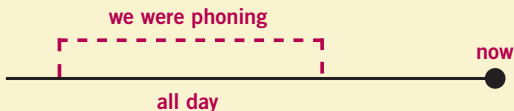


b



- 2 To give background information in the past.

*We **were phoning** customers all day.*



Unit 16

Language at work | Contrasting language

Contrasting language

Form

- 1 Place *although* and *even though* at the beginning of the sentence or between the two contrasting parts of the sentence.

Although the conference was a waste of time, we made some useful contacts.

We made some useful contacts, even though the conference was a waste of time.

- 2 Put a comma before *but* and place it between the two contrasting parts of the sentence.

The conference was a waste of time, but we made some useful contacts.

- 3 Break the two contrasting parts into two sentences when you use *however*.

The conference was a waste of time. However, we made some useful contacts.

- 4 *Despite* is either followed by a noun, the *-ing* form, or noun + *-ing* form. It can also be followed by *the fact that* if you do not want to use the *-ing* form.

Despite the terrible weather, the business trip to India was a great success.

Despite the weather being terrible, the business trip to India was a great success.

Despite the fact that the weather was terrible, the business trip to India was a great success.

Use

- 1 Use *but* to show a contrast between two parts of a sentence.

We need more staff, but we can't afford to employ anyone else.

- 2 *Although*, *even though*, *despite*, and *however* can also be used to show contrast.

Despite the fact that it is a Swedish company, the staff communicate in English.

It is a Swedish company. However, the staff communicate in English.

Even though it is a Swedish company, the staff communicate in English.

Language tip

Even though gives more emphasis than *although*.

Although they had given plenty of notice, their boss wasn't happy.

Even though they had given plenty of notice, their boss wasn't happy.