

The book cover features a dark grey background with three overlapping circles in a light beige color. The title 'Pearls of the English Language' is written in a large, bold, black sans-serif font, centered across the circles. Below the title, the author's name 'Peter Harvey' is centered between two horizontal white lines. At the bottom, the text 'Illustrations by Alison Litherland' is centered in a smaller, italicized font.

Pearls of the English Language

Peter Harvey

Illustrations by **Alison Litherland**

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Introduction

As the name of the book suggests, Pearls of the English Language consists of concentrated pieces of concise information about the English language that are intended to help people who are learning it. They are written and presented in a form that makes it easy to assimilate and remember them.

Each Pearl contains the basic elements of the point that is being made. They cannot include all the details and exceptions, and are not intended to do so.

More complete information about these points and many more aspects of the English language can be found in *A Guide to English Language Usage*, also by Peter Harvey and published by Lavengro Books.

This book describes British English with some notes on American usage.

I must thank *Alison Litherland* for the illustrations. Her artistic work can be seen on her website www.alisonlitherland.com.

About Peter Harvey



I have spent many happy years teaching English. I have worked in Germany, Zambia and Saudi Arabia, but I have spent most of my life teaching adults in Spain.

I enjoy explaining the English language to people who want to learn it and am pleased to reach a wider audience through my books.

© sample

He who would search for pearls must dive below.

John Dryden



A

above & over; below & under



Above means *higher than*:
The castle is above the city.

Over means *vertically above*:
The lamp is over the table.

Clearly, anything that is over something is also above it.

Over and *under* are used with numbers:
Under 18 years; Over 3,000 people.

We say *above average* and *below average*.

Below and **beneath** mean *lower than*:
The city is below/beneath the castle.

Under and **underneath** mean *vertically below*:
The table is under(neath) the lamp.



Beneath means *of lower value*:
That idea is beneath my consideration.
She married beneath her. (She married a man of a lower social status.)



abroad & foreign

Abroad is an adverb. It means *to or in another country*. You can *go abroad* for your holidays or you can *live abroad*.

Foreign is the adjective relating to other countries e.g. *foreign languages* or *foreign money*. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office handles the UK's foreign affairs.

It is not written *foreing*. It is not a word ending in *-ing*.

A **foreigner** is someone from another country.

A **stranger** is a person that you do not know. This is not the same as a foreigner. It has nothing to do with their nationality or country of origin or residence. It does not suggest that this person is strange in the sense of being unusual.

accents

English words do not have accents or other marks. These characters are not found on English computer keyboards.

They are sometimes written on foreign words used in English such as *cliché*, *façade* and *mañana* where they affect the pronunciation, but often they are just omitted completely.

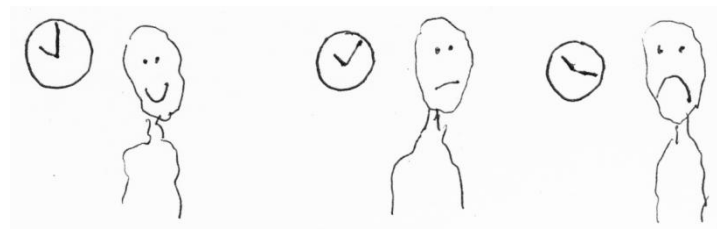
ago, since & for

Ago says how far back in the past something happened:

She arrived ten minutes ago.

Since /sɪns/ relates a state or action in the present or past to its starting point. It is used with the present perfect or past perfect:

I have/had been waiting since ten o'clock.



For gives the duration of an action that is continuing, or is completed, or is in the future:

They have lived in London for two years (using present perfect because they live there now).

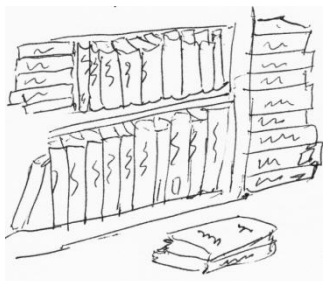
They lived in London for two years (using past simple because they do not live there now).

I'll be living in London for two years.

See FUTURE CONTINUOUS; PAST SIMPLE & PRESENT PERFECT.

a lot of, much/many & plenty of

A lot of is used in all kinds of sentences:



I've got a lot of time.

Have you got a lot of books?

I haven't got a lot of time.

Lots of can be used instead of *a lot of*.

Much, which is uncountable, and *many*, which is countable, are usually only used in negative sentences and in questions as an alternative to *a lot of*:

I haven't got much time; Have you got many books?

In affirmative sentences they are rather formal:

I have given much thought to it; Many people believe it.

They are used with adverbs:

Too much, so much, very many.

Plenty of suggests an amount or number that is more than enough. *I've got plenty of money* does not mean that I am very rich. It means that I have more money in my pocket than we expect to spend this evening so we do not need to go to the bank to get more.

(al)though, despite & in spite of

(Al)though is a conjunction:

I went out (al)though it was raining.

Both *although* and *though* can be used in such sentences. There is no difference in meaning between *though* and *although*. These words are interchangeable.

Even though is emphatic:

I went out even though it was raining.

Despite and *in spite of* are prepositions:

I went out despite the rain; I went out in spite of the rain.

Despite and *in spite of* can be used equally. There is no difference in meaning between them. They are interchangeable.



American English

There are differences between British and American English but they are not very great. The main grammar differences in American English are:

- the use of the past simple with *just* (*I just arrived*) for British present perfect (*I have just arrived*)
- *gotten* is sometimes used as the past participle of *get*.
- no preposition is used with days: *I'll arrive Monday* for British *I'll arrive on Monday*.

There are a few minor spelling differences including:

GB / US -our / -or (*colour / color*)

-re / -er (*theatre / theater*)

-ogue / -og (*dialogue / dialog*)

-ce / -se (*defence / defense*)

axe / ax

plough / plow

tyre / tire

There are some important differences in vocabulary but there is no great difficulty in communication.

More complete information is available in *A Guide to English Language Usage*.

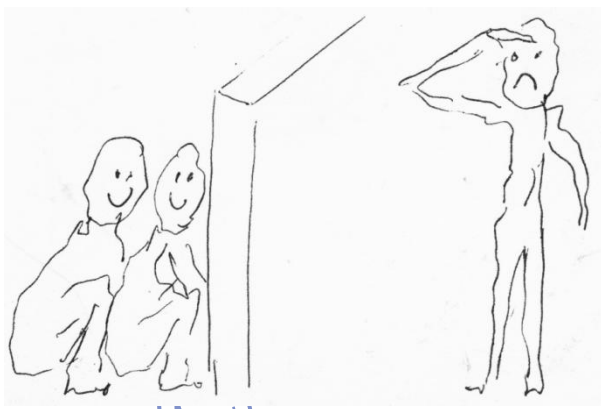
See DATES; PREPOSITIONS WITH TIME; PROGRAMME.

any

The *any* /'eni/ forms *anybody*, *anyone*, and *anything* are used as the object in questions and negative sentences. It is important to remember that they are not negative themselves and must be used with a negative particle:

Did you see anybody?

I didn't see anybody.



The negative forms are *nobody*, *no-one* and *nothing*:

I saw nobody.

I knew no-one.

I heard nothing.

When *any* is used as the subject of an affirmative sentence it implies that all are possible without restriction.

Anybody will help you is the opposite of *Nobody will help you*.

Arab

Arab is the adjective used for the people and culture, and is the nationality noun:

My neighbour is an Arab.

Arabia and **Arabian** refer to the Arabian peninsula.

Arabic is used for the language. It is the only case in English where a language name is different from the nationality adjective.

arrive

Arrive describes position, not movement. It can only be used with prepositions which describe position, basically *in*, *on* or *at*. It cannot be used with *to*:

He arrived in the pub before me.

but

He came to the pub by bus.

We arrived at the airport an hour before take-off.

but

We travelled to the airport by taxi.

Other prepositions can be used, for example *on*, *over*, *next to*:

The plane arrived over Paris at 12.30.

* * * * *

Other letters

* * * * *



sample

Appendix 1: phonetic symbols

vowels

/i:/ see, sea, chief, these

/ɪ/ sit, hymn

/e/ bed

/æ/ cat

/ɑ:/ arm

/ɒ/ hot

/ɔ:/ born, Paul, walk, fall

/ʊ/ put, book

/u:/ moon

/ʌ/ run

/ɜ:/ her, fur, sir

/ə/ See SCHWA

diphthongs

/eɪ/ day, lain, made

/əʊ/ no, know, rode, road

/aɪ/ my, die, high, ride

/aʊ/ how, house

/ɔɪ/ boy, boil

/iə/ near, beer, tear, here

/eə/ hair, there, tear

/ʊə/ poor, sure, curious

consonants

/b/ but

/d/ dog

/f/ few, photo

/g/ get

/h/ he

/j/ yes

/k/ cat, kid, quit, chemist

/l/ leg

/m/ man, bomb

/n/ no, know, gnome

/p/ pen

/r/ red, write

/s/ sit, city, psych-

/t/ top, missed

/v/ voice

/w/ we, wheel

/z/ zoo, plays, lives

/ʃ/ she, station, mission

/ʒ/ decision, measure

/θ/ thin

/ð/ this

/ŋ/ ring, ink

/x/ loch (Scottish)

/tʃ/ chip

/dʒ/ jar, judge

/ʔ/ glottal stop

Appendix 2: irregular verbs

This is a list of common English irregular verbs. A full list can be found in reference books such as my Guide to English Language Usage.

| infinitive | past tense | past participle |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| be | was/were | been |
| bear | bore | born/borne |
| beat | beat | beaten |
| begin | began | begun |
| bend | bent | bent |
| bite | bit | bitten |
| blow | blew | blown |
| break | broke | broken |
| bring | brought | brought |
| build | built | built |
| buy | bought | bought |
| can | could | (been able) |
| catch | caught | caught |
| choose | chose | chosen |
| come | came | come |
| cost | cost | cost |
| cut | cut | cut |
| deal | dealt | dealt |
| dig | dug | dug |
| do | did | done |
| draw | drew | drawn |
| drink | drank | drunk |
| drive | drove | driven |
| eat | ate | eaten |
| fall | fell | fallen |
| feel | felt | felt |
| fight | fought | fought |

| infinitive | past tense | past participle |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| find | found | found |
| fly | flew | flown |
| forget | forgot | forgotten |
| freeze | froze | frozen |
| get | got | got |
| give | gave | given |
| go | went | gone |
| grow | grew | grown |
| hang | hung | hung |
| have | had | had |
| hear | heard | heard |
| hide | hid | hidden |
| hit | hit | hit |
| hold | held | held |
| hurt | hurt | hurt |
| keep | kept | kept |
| know | knew | known |
| lay | laid | laid |
| leave | left | left |
| lend | lent | lent |
| let | let | let |
| lie | lay | lain |
| lose | lost | lost |
| make | made | made |
| mean | meant | meant |
| meet | met | met |
| put | put | put |
| quit | quit/quitted | quit/quitted |
| read /ri;d/ | read /red/ | read /red/ |
| ring | rang | rung |
| rise | rose | risen |

| infinitive | past tense | past participle |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| run | ran | run |
| say | said | said |
| see | saw | seen |
| sell | sold | sold |
| send | sent | sent |
| set | set | set |
| shoot | shot | shot |
| show | showed | shown |
| shut | shut | shut |
| sing | sang | sung |
| sit | sat | sat |
| sleep | slept | slept |
| speak | spoke | spoken |
| spend | spent | spent |
| stand | stood | stood |
| steal | stole | stolen |
| swear | swore | sworn |
| sweep | swept | swept |
| swim | swam | swum |
| take | took | taken |
| teach | taught | taught |
| tell | told | told |
| think | thought | thought |
| throw | threw | thrown |
| tread | trod | trodden |
| wake | woke | woken |
| wear | wore | worn |
| weep | wept | wept |
| win | won | won |
| write | wrote | written |

A Guide to English Language Usage for non-native speakers

... an entertaining and illuminating read ... shows a high awareness of learners' needs – it is clearly written by someone with solid classroom experience ... The grammar sections are a strong area of the book ... The information provided [on pronunciation] is accurate and relevant ... the cultural information as a whole is well-presented, colourful and accurate ... [it offers] clear and useful directions for learners

Modern English Teacher

Every English fact at your fingertips ... a more than handy reference tool for all involved in imparting linguistic knowledge on a regular basis. In the author's alphabetically arranged detailed content one can only admire the spirit of Dr Johnson ... it will help out when dealing with potentially awkward customers, or those keen to try out a new teacher.

ELGazette

When you start reading it, you are reminded of Modern English Usage by Fowler; however, in this case Peter Harvey is dealing with the reality of the foreign learner and what that learner wants to know ... A Guide to English Language Usage is a good reference book for all of us who are teaching and for advanced students as well. It is worth having in our libraries ... It is very practical, having been written by a teacher who knows his trade, and is highly recommendable.

TESOL Spain Newsletter

Not just a reference book explaining the intricacies of English grammar, but also a source of entertainment for the language-lover, covering numerous areas of the culture of the English-speaking world.

Dr Brian Mott
Department of English and German Philology
Barcelona University

Great English Mistakes made by Spanish-speakers (with a few Catalan specials)

An easy-to-read and user-friendly book ... grammar receives careful attention ... may benefit both intermediate and advanced students of English ... Teachers of English may also find it useful.

TESOL Spain

While [this book] is clearly aimed at the Spanish-speaking learner of English it is also valuable for the teacher of English working in a Spanish-speaking environment ... [it highlights] many of the false friends which exist ... Translations show the learner what words do, and, equally importantly, do not mean ... with a wealth of real-life examples which are sometimes humorous, the book is very readable ... There is certainly a gap in the market for such a book ... of all the many English language books I have on my bookshelf, this is the only one that has a long waiting list of Spanish-speaking friends wanting to borrow it.

Modern English Teacher



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