

EPISODE 78
LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



MULTITASKING

Latest research suggests that typical middle-class **city-dwellers** (= people living in the city) now have so many **time-saving** (= that save our time) gadgets that they can fit into 24 hours the same quantity of tasks that a decade ago would have taken 31 hours to complete.

For many people, the **frenzy** (=rush, craze) starts over breakfast, reading emails while making toast. It carries on in the car where a driver with an **earpiece** (= a piece that you use for talking on the phone without holding it) holds a conference call. Work is then in a **blizzard** (= a great number of) of emails, phone calls and meetings, often happening **simultaneously** (= at the same time). The most intense period of multitasking appears to be in the evening. People will be pressing the TV remote control while using a **wireless** (= not using wires) laptop, emailing or texting your friends on mobile phones and holding a conversation with family members. Multitasking is nowadays a perfectly natural everyday **occurrence** (= something that happens). We can cook dinner while **engrossed** (= so interested and involved in sth) in a soap or we can chat to a friend while walking down the street without **bumping into** (= meeting sb by chance) anybody or getting **run over** (= hit sb or sth with a vehicle). However, can our brain get overloaded at any time???



EXERCISE 1

Decide if the sentences below are true or false. Correct the false ones.

1. City –dwellers spend 24 hours fiddling with gadgets.
2. People are naturally unable to perform many tasks at the same time.
3. Talking on the phone walking in the street you bump into others.
4. People multitask because the times have changed.



EXERCISE 2

Categorise the expressions into 3 categories:

the 50s night New Year’s Eve the summer the afternoon March Christmas
 6th May the weekend the moment a moment 9am the Middle Ages noon
 the nick of time no time midnight time =punctually Easter Monday
 our anniversary Christmas Day

At	In	On

ENGLISH IN USE 

IN TIME vs ON TIME

Remember that these are two different expressions:

In time = early enough

On time = punctually

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



EXERCISE 3

Match two columns to find definitions:

1.IN THE NICK OF TIME	a)Time and again/often/repeatedly
2.TIME AFTER TIME	b)It is finished
3.IN TIME	c)Temporarily
4.ON TIME	d) When the time is favourable
5.TIME'S UP	e) Not to hurry
6.FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE	f) Rushing/in a hurry
7.FOR THE TIME BEING	g)More time available than you need
8.ALL IN GOOD TIME	h) Be in prison
9.HAVE TIME ON YOUR HANDS	i) Delay things to gain more time
10.IN NO TIME	j) At the last possible moment
11.PRESSED FOR TIME	k) Wait for sth doing sth else
12.DO TIME	l) Very fast/soon
13.PLAY FOR TIME	m) Punctually

14.TAKE ONE'S TIME	n) With time to spare
15.BIDE ONE'S TIME	o) As a way of remembering enjoyable times in the past

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



RUN OUT = to use all of sth / stop being legal / not to have any more left / be left by sb

Many hospitals are **running out of** money.

They returned home from holidays when the money **ran out**.

My contract **runs out** next month

When does your passport **run out**?

Jane's husband **ran out on** her when their children were young.

NEWS



To stop wasting a finite resource, companies should tackle time problems systematically rather than leave them to individuals.

When a critical strategic initiative at a major multinational **stalled** recently, company leaders **targeted** a talented, **up-and-coming** executive to **take over** the project. There was just one problem: she was already working 18-hour days, five days a week. When

the leaders put this to the CEO, he matter-of-factly remarked that by his count she still had “30 more hours Monday to Friday, plus 48 more on the weekend.”

Extreme as this case may seem, the **perennial time-scarcity** problem that underlies it has become more **acute** in recent years. The impact of always-on communications, the growing complexity of global organizations, and the pressures **imposed** by **profound** economic uncertainty have all added to a feeling among executives that there are simply not enough hours in the day to get things done.

Stalled = almost stopped

Targeted = aimed

Up-and-coming = likely to develop

Take over = take control over

Perennial =always existing

Time scarcity = having not enough time

Imposed = sth that people are forced to do

Profound = huge

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex. 1

1. False.
2. False.
3. False.
4. True

Ex. 2

At	In	On
Night	The 50s	New Year's Eve
Christmas	The summer	6 th May
The weekend	The afternoon	Time =punctually
The moment	March	Monday
9am	A moment	Our anniversary
Noon	The Middle Ages	Christmas Day
Midnight	The nick of time	
Easter	No time	

Ex. 3

1. J
2. A
3. N
4. M
5. B
6. O
7. C
8. D
9. G
10. L
11. F
12. H
13. I
14. E
15. K