

# **Games for** Grammar Practice

**A resource book of  
grammar games and  
interactive activities**

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PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK  
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA  
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, VIC 3166, Australia  
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain  
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 2001

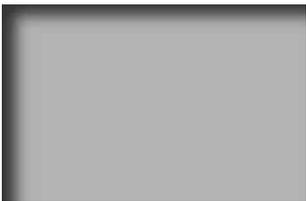
Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Formata Light 9/13.5pt. System QuarkXPress® [GECKO]

A catalogue for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

ISBN 0 521 663423



# Introduction

*Games for Grammar Practice* is a carefully designed selection of over forty games and activities, for intensive and interactive grammar practice with basic to advanced learners of English. Because it follows closely the grammar syllabus of most EFL/ESL courses, it is a most useful complement to many course and grammar books in use today.

## THE IDEAS BEHIND THE ACTIVITIES

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**Cooperative learning** You will probably notice that, in most games, knowing the language is not the main factor that leads to winning; actually, luck, strategy and creativity play important roles. This has been done on purpose to foster a cooperative rather than competitive atmosphere, and to make sure weaker learners can also participate and win. Also, in some of the games there is no winner at all.

**Teaching, not testing** The activities in the book are meant to give learners an opportunity to practise and experiment with language. For this reason many of them present a lot of input while requiring relatively little production in the target structure. This encourages learners to concentrate on processing the meaning of target structures instead of pressuring them to produce such constructions before they are ready to.

**Self and peer correction** Our experience tells us that self and peer correction are often more effective than teacher correction in helping students to take responsibility for their own learning. Thus most of the game rules and activity procedures urge the participants to monitor their own as well as their peers' language production.

**Practice** The activities have been designed to make sure that learners get plenty of practice in the target structures.

**Personalization** There is plenty of room for learners to establish rapport with their classmates by sharing their experiences, values and beliefs.

**Oral interaction** All the activities are interactive to encourage learners to attend to meaning and form as they interpret and produce language.

**Information gap** If exchange of information is one of the basic reasons why people communicate in real life, then classroom activities should also urge learners to seek and provide information.

**Task-orientation** As in real life, learners will be using the information obtained from others to accomplish tasks.

**Variety** You will find a lot of variety as to context, activity type, type of interaction and materials, because novelty helps to sustain interest.

**Enjoyment** Fun and pleasure in learning are probably the strongest motivation factors. In our activities, they take the form of challenge, humour and acknowledgement of learners' creativity.

## PRACTICAL TIPS

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**Re-using the material** It is probably best to have the boards and cards laminated. However, as this may turn out to be quite expensive, you may instead photocopy the pages directly onto cardboard or paste the photocopies onto sheets of cardboard. As for the boards, another inexpensive solution is to keep them inside plastic bags.

**Sorting out sets of cards** This task will be much easier for you and your students if you distinguish the sets by colour. So, either photocopy the pages onto coloured sheets or draw straight lines right across or down the back of the sheets with coloured felt-tipped pens before cutting up the cards. You may also want to store them away in coloured envelopes or bags.

**Substituting material** In case you do not have enough counters, use coloured paper clips instead. They are easy to find and inexpensive.

**Preparing for activities** Read the instructions carefully and make sure you have the necessary material. Either explain or demonstrate how the game or activity works. Use L1 if necessary, especially with beginners. Note that the vocabulary lists provided in the instruction sheets reflect what we think might be new to students. Always check the boards, cards, or grids for vocabulary items, and pre-teach them if necessary.

# Thanks and acknowledgements

Our special thanks go to Maria Cristina de Araujo Asperti, who contributed with invaluable suggestions, endless patience, encouragement and friendship, and to Carlos Barbisan for his interest and support.

We also want to thank all our students who helped to test the material in this book, and thus contributed to its improvement.

The authors and publishers would like to thank the following individuals for their help in commenting on the material, piloting it with their students and for the invaluable feedback which they provided:

Jania Barrell, UK; Sue Bremner, Singapore; Therese Elliot, France; Andrea Paul, Japan; Wayne Trotman, Turkey.

Illustrations: Kathy Baxendale (pp. 13, 91); Belinda Evans (pp. 11, 27, 53, 113); Martin Fish (pp. 17, 18, 65); Gecko Ltd (pp. 9, 31, 44, 45, 46, 51, 67, 95); Melanie Hardy (p. 65); Phil Healey (p. 21); Amanda McPhail (pp. 15, 23, 88, 110); Ian Mitchell (pp. 64, 107, 108); Rhiannon Powell (p. 25); Nick Schon (pp. 39, 63, 105); Lisa Smith (pp. 28, 29, 76); Shaun Williams (p. 79).

Text design: Gecko Ltd.

Page make up: Gecko Ltd.

Cover illustration: Jamel Akib

# Games for Grammar Practice

## Map of the book

KEY: B = BEGINNER; E = ELEMENTARY; P = PRE-INTERMEDIATE; I = INTERMEDIATE; U = UPPER-INTERMEDIATE; A = ADVANCED

Activity	Language focus	Activity type	Topic	Level	Time (minutes)	Page
<b>UNIT 1 Present</b>						
1.1 Balloon tours	Present simple of <i>be</i>	Information pool	Countries	B	10–15	8
1.2 A day at home	Present continuous	Board game	Activities done at home	E	10–20	10
1.3 Looking for a flatmate	Present simple	Interview	Habits and routines	E	20	12
1.4 Lend a hand	Present simple 3rd person singular	Problem solving	Age, occupations and hobbies	P	20	14
1.5 Time and again	Adverbials of frequency	Betting game	Activities and events	E–P	20–30	16
<b>UNIT 2 Past</b>						
2.1 Gotcha!	Simple past	Questions and answers	Activities and events	E	10	20
2.2 Everyday hazards	Simple past/past continuous	Story telling	Funny accidents	I	20	22
2.3 Sweet memories	<i>Used to</i>	Board game	Growing-up memories	I–U	20–30	24
<b>UNIT 3 Present perfect and past perfect</b>						
3.1 Around town	Present perfect simple	Board game	Recent experiences or events	I–U	20	26
3.2 Snooping around	Present perfect simple	Truth or dare	Life experiences	I–A	20–30	30
3.3 Before or after?	Past perfect simple	Card game	Causes and consequences	I–U	15–20	35
<b>UNIT 4 Future</b>						
4.1 What on earth...?	<i>Going to</i>	Board game	Intended actions	P–I	20	38
4.2 Make it snappy	<i>Will</i>	Card game	Unplanned decisions	P–I	10	40
<b>UNIT 5 Mixed tenses</b>						
5.1 Easy rider	Mixed tenses	Board game	Travelling	P	15–20	43

## Map of the book

Activity	Language focus	Activity type	Topic	Level	Time (minutes)	Page
<b>UNIT 6 Conditional and wish constructions</b>						
6.1 Nothing's perfect!	First conditional	Simulation	Jobs	I	20	47
6.2 Watch your step!	Second conditional	Snakes and ladders	Unusual behaviour	I	20	50
6.3 Pick my good deed	Third conditional	Board game	Justifying actions	U–A	15–20	52
6.4 The wish race	Wish constructions	Grid game	Regrets and complaints	I–U	15–20	55
<b>UNIT 7 Reported speech</b>						
7.1 Who's got my message?	Reported speech	Card game	Telephone messages	I	15–20	57
<b>UNIT 8 Modals</b>						
8.1 Crazy cans	<i>Can</i> for ability	Crazy eights	Abilities	E	10–15	60
8.2 Let's go together	<i>Like v. would like</i>	Find someone who	Invitations	E	10–20	62
8.3 Spinning ideas	Modals (simple)	Scattergories	Constraints and possibilities	P	15–20	66
8.4 Tough luck!	Modals (perfect)	Debate	Speculations	A	–	68
<b>UNIT 9 Passive and causative</b>						
9.1 Something in common	Simple present and past passive	Trivia pursuit	World knowledge	E–I	15–20	71
9.2 Grown-ups!	Passive + infinitive	Discussion	Growing-up experiences	I–A	20	73
9.3 Round the clock	Causative with <i>have</i>	Role-play	Errands and services	I–U	20	75
<b>UNIT 10 Questions and auxiliaries</b>						
10.1 Making friends	Wh-questions with present simple	Find someone who	Personal information	B–E	10–20	78
10.2 What's my answer?	Yes/no questions with present simple	Betting game	Open	B–E	15–20	80
10.3 All about us	Wh-questions with mixed tenses	Personal trivia	Open/personal	Any	20–30	82
10.4 Unique me	Auxiliaries <i>too, either, so, neither</i>	Sharing	Open/personal	E–I	10–15	84

## Map of the book

Activity	Language focus	Activity type	Topic	Level	Time (minutes)	Page
<b>UNIT 11 Articles</b>						
11.1 Come one, come all	<i>a/an</i> v. <i>some</i>	Board game	Food	B–E	15–20	87
<b>UNIT 12 There and it</b>						
12.1 Pack 'n' go	<i>There be</i> in present simple	Information pool	Hotels	E	10–15	90
12.2 Rain or shine	<i>It</i> as subject	Tic-tac-toe	Weather conditions	I	10–15	92
<b>UNIT 13 Verb forms</b>						
13.1 Verb trap	<i>To</i> v. <i>-ing</i>	Grid game	Open	I	15–20	94
<b>UNIT 14 Prepositions</b>						
14.1 The preposition contest	Prepositions of place and time	Tic-tac-toe	Open	B	15	96
14.2 You and I	Adjective + preposition	Sharing	Personality and feelings	I	15–30	98
14.3 Preposition checkers	Verb + preposition	Chinese checkers	Open	U	20	100
<b>UNIT 15 Comparisons</b>						
15.1 How do they compare?	Comparative forms of adjectives	Dominoes	Open	I	20	104
15.2 Three of a kind	Comparative forms of quantifiers	Rummy	Common nouns	P	10–15	106
<b>UNIT 16 Possessives</b>						
16.1 Family album	Subject pronouns and possessive adjectives	Maze	Family	B	15	109
16.2 What a mess!	Genitive <i>'s</i>	Information pool	Personal belongings	E	10	112

# 1.1

## UNIT 1 Present

# Balloon tours

### Language focus

**Present simple of *be* in statements and *wh*-questions**

### Level

Beginner

### Type

Information pool

### Topic

Countries

### Interaction

Pairs

### Time

10–15 minutes

### Material

Worksheets A and B

## Vocabulary

Names of countries: *France, Spain, Australia, USA, Belgium, Mexico*  
Wh-questions: *where, what*  
Prepositions: *from, in, at*

## Comments

This game provides contextualized practice with statements and *wh*-questions contrasting 3rd person singular and plural of *be*. Students are given a task which they can only accomplish by interacting orally with classmates, that is, by requesting and providing information, and then making decisions based on the information obtained.

## Language output

A: *Where is/are (name) from?*  
B: *He/she/they is/are from (country).*  
A: *What hotel is/are he/she/they in?*  
B: *He/she/they is/are at (hotel).*

## Procedures

- 1 Before class, take copies of the worksheet and cut them in half as indicated. In class, give out worksheet A to half of the class, and worksheet B to the other half. Pair off students with worksheets A and B.
- 2 Elicit the questions and answers in **Language output** using the worksheets. If you like, write a skeleton of the dialogue on the board.
- 3 Set the situation and the task by telling your students the following: *You work for Prime Balloon Tours. The company has three balloons for tours over the city, and three tour guides: one speaks English, one speaks French, and the other speaks Spanish. Your task is to decide firstly which tourists should go in which balloon, and secondly how many hotels each guide needs to stop at to pick up tourists. Talk to your partners first to get the information you need to do the task.*
- 4 Doing the activity:
  - ▶ Without looking at each other's worksheet, students ask and answer questions and complete their respective charts.
  - ▶ When they have finished, they answer questions 1 and 2 on their worksheets, together.
  - ▶ Check their answers or decisions with the whole class.

**A****Prime Balloon Tours**

TOURISTS	COUNTRY	HOTEL
John Smith		
Mr and Mrs Dupont	France	The Royal Inn
Julio Banderas	Spain	The Palace
Marie Delon		
Jose and Pepe Garcia		
Kathy and Fred Brown	Australia	The Bridge House

1 In which balloon should the tourists go? Write the names of the tourists under the appropriate balloon.



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2 How many hotels does each guide need to stop at to pick up tourists?

**B****Prime Balloon Tours**

TOURISTS	COUNTRY	HOTEL
John Smith	USA	The Queen's Plaza
Mr and Mrs Dupont		
Julio Banderas		
Marie Delon	Belgium	The Royal Inn
Jose and Pepe Garcia	Mexico	The Palace
Kathy and Fred Brown		

1 In which balloon should the tourists go? Write the names of the tourists under the appropriate balloon.



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2 How many hotels does each guide need to stop at to pick up tourists?