

British and American English – the same, but different

British and American people speak the same language, English, but with some small differences.

1 **Vocabulary** Some words are different in American English, for example, they say **ZIP code**, not **postcode**; **vacation**, not **holiday**; and **cell phone**, not **mobile phone**. Some words have different meanings, for example, in British English a **purse** is a thing where women have their money and credit cards. In American English a **purse** is a woman's bag.

2 **Colour, favour**, and other words that end in **-our** in British English end in **-or** in American English. **Centre, theatre**, and other words that end in **-tre** in British English end in **-ter** in American English.

3 There are some small differences, especially prepositions. For example, Americans say **See you Friday**, but British people say **See you on Friday**.

4 This is the really important difference between American and British English. American accents and British accents are very different. When an American starts speaking, British people know he or she is American, and vice versa.

What foreigners who live in Britain think



Erdal, 39, is from Turkey. He has a café in Cardiff.

In Turkey we work hard and our jobs are important for us. British people don't work like that. They only want to finish work and go home.

Khalal, 39, is from Iraq. He lives in Newcastle. I don't like the weather. One minute it's hot and the next it rains. It changes all the time. And I don't like the food. Potatoes, potatoes, potatoes...

Camille, 20, is from France. She lives in Liverpool. The British are friendly. People in the street often call me 'love', 'sweetheart', and 'darling'. It makes me happy!

Shurooq, 21, is from Oman. She lives in Chorlton, Manchester. In the UK women have a lot of freedom. In my country, if I want to go to the bank I take my brother and he does everything for me. Here I do everything. I like the weather here. I love days when it rains, or it's cold. It's so different from the weather in Oman! The people are also nice and friendly.



Michelle, 24, is from Canada. She lives in London. My favourite thing about Britain is the Scotch eggs. We don't have Scotch eggs where I come from. Everybody says that British food is awful, but I love it, especially in pubs. The shops are great, too, for example Topshop and Primark.



Lian Tang, 24, is from China. She lives in Manchester. I love the UK. Why? Because I like the culture, the art, the history. I also love the beautiful scenery, for example in Cornwall and in Scotland. The only things I don't like about the UK are the weather and the food. I really don't like fish and chips.



Busy lives

Mother...

Marjan Jahangiri, originally from Iran, is one of the only women professors of cardiac surgery in Europe. She does more than 300 operations a year. She lives in London with her husband and their 17-year-old son, Darius.



Can you describe your daily routine?

I get up between 6.00 and 6.30 a.m., I get to work at 7.00, and my meetings usually start at 7.30. After that, I don't have a break. I have lunch at my desk. I often do two operations a day, and I also have lectures and more meetings. At home, I have dinner with my son. Between 9.30 and 11.30 p.m., I do research and I watch the news on TV. One or two nights a week I'm on call, so I probably need to do operations during the night. I often work at weekends, too. But that's OK – I think I have a fantastic life because I love my work.



How do you balance work with your family life?

I spend a lot of time with my son. I want him to learn about hard work and good values, and I want to be an example for him. My husband is away a lot, but we speak on the phone every day. I think one reason why I am successful in my professional life is because he isn't at home all the time!

What do you do to relax?

I play the piano for an hour every day, late at night. I think it helps me with my operations – it's technical in the same way. I also go to the hairdresser twice a week. I do a lot of my research there! They turn the music off for me and I use the time to read all my academic papers.



...and son



Morning

(1) 7.30 He gets up.

He has breakfast and then he goes to school by Tube.

8.20 (2) He to school.

9.00 Lessons start. (3) He has or lessons before lunch.

Afternoon

1.00 He has lunch at (4) .

(5) He starts lessons again.

4.15 He finishes school. He doesn't (6) then. He studies in the library or plays music. On Tuesdays, he (7) in the school choir and on (8) he (9) percussion in the school orchestra.

Evening

6.00 He gets home. (10) He a and then has dinner. After dinner, he does homework for (11) or hours.

(12) He goes to bed.



cardiac surgery – an operation to repair somebody's heart

a lecture – a talk to a group of people to teach them about something, e.g. at university

be on call – be available for work if necessary

do research – study something to learn more about it

the Tube – the London Underground

choir – a group of people who sing together

percussion – musical instruments, e.g. drums

A levels – exams that UK students take in the final year of school

What to do in London at different times of the year

In spring

Watch (or run!) the London Marathon. One of Europe's biggest marathons takes place in spring every year, usually in April. About 40,000 people, including top runners and celebrities, run 26.2 miles through the city. It's a fantastic atmosphere. You can watch anywhere along the route, but the Tower of London and the finish, near Buckingham Palace, are my favourite places. April in London doesn't always mean good weather – be prepared for sun, showers, and wind!



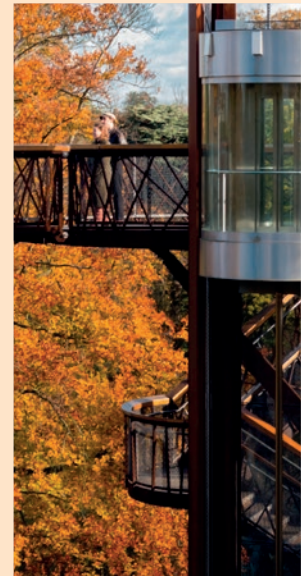
In summer

Go to the Open Air Theatre in Regent's Park. Open from May to September, this is a great place to see Shakespeare and other classics. Come prepared for all types of weather. If it rains – and it can – you can buy plastic raincoats at the theatre. In bad weather they sometimes cancel a performance, but you can use your tickets on a different day. You can buy a picnic or take your own, and you can buy dinner, too (quite expensive!).



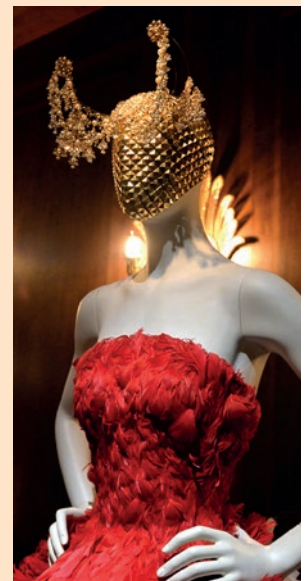
In autumn

Go to the Treetop Walkway at Kew Gardens. This is one of the highlights of Kew, London's botanical gardens. It's open all year round, and it's beautiful in autumn when the trees are changing colour. The Walkway is 18 metres above the ground, and you can see all the gardens and a lot of famous buildings, including Wembley Stadium. You can also see birds and insects very close up, and find out all about the trees around you. But if the weather is very windy, the Walkway sometimes closes.



In winter

Visit the V&A. London is full of wonderful museums, where you can happily spend a cold winter's day. My favourite, which not all tourists know about, is the Victoria and Albert Museum, or V&A. It's the world's top museum for art and design, and has amazing collections of clothes, furniture, jewellery, clocks, and ceramics. Exhibitions include the clothes of fashion designer Alexander McQueen, and the career of David Bowie. It has special activities for children, and a great café open daily until 17.15. Entrance is free, but some exhibitions charge a fee.



The Glass Bottle

Part 1

Hassan and Walid are brothers. They live in a small house in the desert, near the mountains, a long way from a town or village. They're very poor. They have no money and they have no animals. Their house only has two rooms. Every day is the same. They get up, and they have sweet black coffee for breakfast. Then Hassan works in the fields – but Walid just sits and looks at the hot, empty desert and the hot, empty sky. They live with their mother. She looks after **them**, but she's old and tired.

One day she says, 'We're poor and hungry. Why don't you leave here and find work? We need money for food and clothes.'

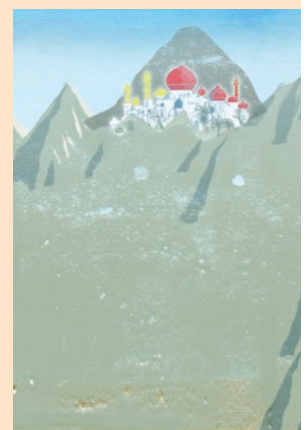
'If you want some money, you have your silver ring – you can sell that,' answers Walid.

'I can't sell **it**', she says. 'It's your father's. Every night I look at it and remember **him**.'

Hassan wants to help his mother, and he decides to leave home. His mother gives him bread, and water in a glass bottle. He kisses **her**, and he walks towards the mountains.

Part 2

Hassan walks for five days through the mountains. The sun shines. At night, it's very cold. Then, one evening, he arrives at a rich and beautiful palace. The prince in the palace welcomes **(1) him**. He gives him food and drink, and Hassan sleeps in a comfortable bed. There is one strange thing – the windows have no glass.



The next day, Hassan says goodbye. **(2) He** wants to thank the prince and give him something, but he only has **(3) his** empty water bottle. He gives **(4) it** to **(5) him**. The prince is very surprised.

‘What’s this?’ he says. ‘I can see through it! It’s beautiful! It’s wonderful!’

(6) He is very happy, and in return he gives Hassan a box.

‘Don’t open **(7) it** until you get home,’ he says. ‘And be careful with it. It’s very valuable.’

Hassan walks through the mountains again, and after five days he arrives home. Walid and **(8) their** mother watch **(9) him** open the box. He finds 100 gold coins inside. His mother is very happy! ‘Hassan, you clever boy!’ she says. ‘Now **(10) we** can buy food and clothes!’

The next night, Walid makes a plan.

‘100 gold coins in return for a glass bottle,’ **(11) he** thinks. ‘If I give the prince my mother’s silver ring, perhaps I can get 1,000 gold coins!’

So Walid gets up, goes very quietly into his mother’s room, and takes **(12) her** ring from a box under her bed. The next morning he asks his brother where the palace is, and he leaves.



Good times, bad times

In the UK, the third Friday in June is the happiest day of the year, says psychologist Dr Cliff Arnall. It's easy to see why – it's summer, it's **warm** outside, the evenings are light, and it's the day before a weekend! And the third Monday in January is the most **depressing** day of the year. Why? Because it's winter, the weather is usually **grey** and cold, the days are **dark**, and Monday is the first day of the working week. People are also often short of money after Christmas, and some people feel bad after breaking their New Year's resolutions.

Do you agree? What's your favourite month, day, and time? And what's your least favourite?

Months

(1) ! It's not too hot, but it's **light** until after 9.00 p.m. here in southern Canada. I like sitting outside on long summer evenings.



I love (2) . I love celebrating Christmas and New Year's Eve! The atmosphere is **fun** and **festive**. I also love the winter, and all the snow is beautiful.



(3) . It's often very windy, and I hate seeing the trees lose their leaves. It makes me feel **sad**.



I don't like (4) . It's the middle of winter, it's **cold**, and I hate Valentine's Day.



Days of the week

My **favourite** day is probably (5) , because I don't like Sundays, and I like going back to work and seeing my friends!



It's **(6)** _____, of course! No work today, no work tomorrow.



(7) _____ is my **least favourite** day of the week, especially the evening. I don't mind working – I like my job – but I don't like thinking about going back to work.



I really hate **(8)** _____. I'm always **tired** because it's the end of the week, and I want to go home and rest. But it's when my friends want to go out, so in the end I often go out with them, but I never enjoy it.



Times of day

My favourite time is **(9)** _____, because my flatmates leave the house quite early and then I'm all alone. I can enjoy my breakfast coffee in silence, and then go to university.



I like **(10)** _____ on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. It's when Champion's League games start in the UK, and it's when I start to relax and think of what to eat.



My least favourite time is **(11)** _____. That's when I set my alarm in the morning so I can have a shower and a quick breakfast. I hate getting up early. I'm absolutely not a morning person.



Surprisingly, my least favourite time of the day is **(12)** _____, when I finish work. I hate the journey home on the Tube. It's **dirty**, and often you can't sit anywhere. It's not so bad in the morning.



Kurt Vonnegut

Kurt Vonnegut was an American writer. He was born in 1922 in Indianapolis. He was a soldier during World War II, and was in a prison camp in Germany from 1944 to 1945. His first novel was **Piano Player**, published in 1952, but it wasn't a success. However, his novel **Slaughterhouse-Five**, an anti-war book, was a best-seller, and was made into a film in 1972. In later life, he was interested in politics and painting. His art was an escape from the 'work' of writing.



Billy Dee Williams

Billy Dee Williams is an American actor. He was born in New York in 1937. His father was a caretaker and his mother was a lift operator. He was a student at the High School of Music & Art. He was a theatre actor for 15 years, and in 1959 he was in his first film. He was very successful in the 1980s, when he was in two Star Wars films, **The Empire Strikes Back** and **Return of the Jedi**. Before he was an actor, Williams was at a fine arts academy in New York, and this self-portrait is in the National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C.



Adele

Adele is a British singer and songwriter. She was born Adele Laurie Blue Adkins in London in 1988. When she was a child she was much more interested in music than in schoolwork. When she was 14, her musical tastes were very different from most teenagers – she was a big fan of Billie Holiday and Eminem. She was a performing arts student at the BRIT School in London, where she was a classmate of singers Leona Lewis and Jessie J. Her first album, **19**, in 2008, was an immediate success and she is now a major star. Adele isn't a painter; this self-portrait was for an online art project called Face Britain.



Wrong name, wrong place

Last March, Adam and his girlfriend India, who live in Manchester, decided to go to Ibiza on holiday. India's stepfather booked the tickets for them with Ryanair. He needed Adam's surname. He wasn't sure what it was, so he looked on Facebook. The name on Adam's page was Adam West, and he booked the tickets in that name, to fly on 11th June.



- A** ...to pay £220, so he decided to change his surname to West. It was free to change his name, but then he needed a new passport with his new name. The new passport...
- B** Unfortunately it wasn't the right name – 'Adam West' is the name of an actor who played Batman in the 1960s. Adam...
- C** ...that it was possible, but he needed to pay £220 – double the cost of the flight. He didn't want...
- D** ...used the name on his Facebook page as a joke. His real name is Adam Armstrong. When Adam...
- E** ...realized the mistake, he phoned Ryanair. He asked them to change the surname on his booking. Ryanair replied...
- F** ...was £103 – so Adam saved £117. And he and India travelled to Ibiza on 11th June.

New Year's Eve –

One to remember or one to forget?

Mina This was last year, and I went to a hotel with some friends. It had a bar on the top floor, and that's where the party was. We got there at about **11.00**. About **half an hour before midnight** I realized I didn't have my phone – it was in my car. So I took the lift down to the car park. I found my phone, and then I got back into the lift – I was the only person in it. But then, between the third and fourth floors, the lift stopped completely and I couldn't get out. I pressed the button and asked for help, but a guy said there was an electrical fault and I needed to wait. Then a few minutes later, I could hear people outside celebrating. It was awful – I didn't get out until almost **1.00** in the morning. And on top of it all, my friends didn't realize that I wasn't there!

Jenny I had a fantastic New Year's Eve in Iceland in **2013**. First, we went to a really expensive restaurant for dinner. It was early, about **6.00**, because that's when people have dinner in Iceland. I wore a lovely dress, but after dinner we got a taxi back to the hotel and I put on boots and a warm jacket. Then we went out and watched the amazing fireworks. Suddenly, at about **10.00**, everyone went home to watch TV – there's this famous programme they always watch on New Year's Eve! It was really strange – the streets were empty for a bit. But then **just before midnight** people came out again and danced and drank till about **5.00** in the morning. It was incredible.



Andy I'm a DJ, and this happened to me a few years ago. It was my first time at a New Year's Eve party, and I planned all the music really carefully. I knew exactly which tracks I was going to play. The first part of the night was fine, but just when I thought it was time to start the **countdown to midnight**, I saw that people were all at the bar, not on the dance floor, and the TVs were on. On the screens I could see fireworks, and Big Ben! I looked at my watch and I realized it was about two minutes slow! I felt really stupid. I bought a new watch the next day!



- **June 22nd 1965** – Jeremy Travers’s 60th birthday
- He had dinner at his country house with:
 - Amanda, his wife
 - Barbara, his daughter
 - Gordon, his business partner
 - Claudia, his secretary.
- Next morning, Amanda Travers went to her husband’s bedroom. She found him dead.

The Travers murder

Inspector Granger arrived at about 9.00. He **(1) was** a tall man with a big moustache. Amanda, Barbara, Claudia, and Gordon **(2) were** in the living room. The inspector **(3) came** in.



The victim,
Jeremy Travers



Amanda Travers



Barbara Travers



Gordon Summers



Claudia Pasquale



'Mr Travers died between midnight last night and 7.00 this morning,' he **(4) said**. 'Somebody in this room killed him.' He looked at them one by one, but nobody **(5) spoke**.

'Mrs Travers, I want to talk to you first. Come into the library with me, please.'

Amanda followed the inspector into the library and they **(6) sat** down.

'What did your husband do after dinner last night?'

'We finished dinner at about 9.30. Then Jeremy said he was tired and he **(7) went** to bed.'

'Did you go to bed then?'

'No, I didn't. I went for a walk in the garden.'

'What time did you go to bed?'

'About quarter to twelve.'

'Was your husband asleep?'

'I don't know, Inspector. We...we **(8) slept** in different rooms. But I **(9) saw** that his door was closed.'

'Did you hear anything when you were in your room?'

'Yes, I **(10) heard** Jeremy's bedroom door. It opened. I **(11) thought** it was Jeremy. Then it closed again. I **(12) read** in bed for half an hour and then I went to sleep.'

'What time did you get up this morning?'

'I **(13) got up** at about 7.15. I **(14) had** breakfast and at 8.00 I **(15) took** a cup of tea to my husband. I **(16) found** him in bed. He was...dead.'

'Tell me, Mrs Travers, did you love your husband?'

'Jeremy is...was a difficult man.'

'But did you love him, Mrs Travers?'

'No, Inspector. I hated him.'

Would you like to stay in room 333?

Britain is well-known for having houses and hotels with ghosts, but did you know there was one in central London?

The Langham is a famous London hotel situated between Hyde Park and Regent's Park and opposite the BBC. The hotel was built in 1865 and has 380 rooms. In the past, many famous people stayed at the hotel, including the Duke of Windsor, Napoleon III, and the Irish writer Oscar Wilde. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who wrote the Sherlock Holmes stories, also stayed there, and The Langham appears in some of the stories. More recently, the hotel appeared in a James Bond film, **GoldenEye**.

The Langham has the reputation of being haunted, especially room 333. People say the hotel has several ghosts, including a Victorian doctor who murdered his wife and then killed himself. He appears on the third floor and in room 333. In 1973, a well-known BBC journalist woke up suddenly in the night and saw 'the shape of a man wearing Victorian evening clothes floating towards him'. The journalist got up and ran. Other ghosts also like room 333. A German prince who jumped out of a fourth floor window walks through the door in the early morning, and another ghost moves the bed when the guests are asleep.

When the English cricket team stayed at the hotel, players reported that some very strange things happened during the night. One of the players told the **Daily Mail** newspaper, 'It was very hot in the room and I couldn't sleep. Suddenly the taps in the bathroom turned on. I turned the lights on and the taps turned off. Then when I turned the lights off, the taps turned on again. It was very strange.'

Why I eat the same thing every day



Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg, and Albert Einstein have one thing in common. They all wear, or wore, more or less the same clothes every day. Why? Because if you wear the same clothes every day, you don't waste time choosing what to wear. I decided to copy them, but with my diet, so I eat the same food every day. This is what I have:

- breakfast: a cup of black coffee
- lunch: some smoked salmon, an avocado, and some cream cheese on a piece of bread
- dinner: some bacon, two eggs, some cheese, and some green vegetables

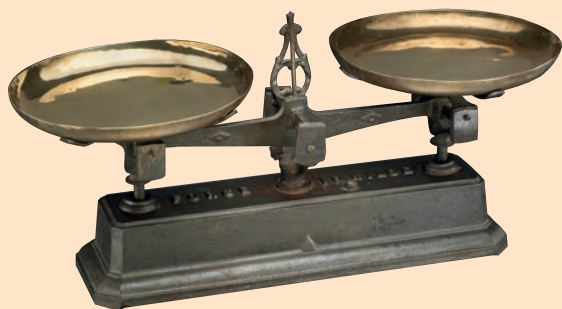
The good thing about this plan for me is that I spend less time and money buying food, and I also never need to worry if my diet is healthy or not (because I know it is). Now, you're probably thinking, 'he's sure to get tired of eating the same food every day'. Well, after about a year, I can promise you that I'm not. I change my meals a bit by having different kinds of cheese and using different herbs and spices. I also change the vegetables that I have for dinner.



Fascinating facts about...

sugar and salt

At different times in history, both sugar and salt were called 'white gold', because they were so expensive and difficult to get. But there are many more interesting facts about sugar and salt...



- (1) [redacted] is used to make glass, washing powder, and paper.
- (2) [redacted] really helps the medicine go down! It's an important ingredient of many modern medicines.
- Christopher Columbus introduced (3) [redacted] to the New World in 1493 on his second voyage.
- If you put (4) [redacted] into a vase of flowers, the flowers last longer.
- If you want to check if an egg is fresh, put it in a cup with water and (5) [redacted]. If the egg floats, it isn't very fresh.
- In the UK, there's a club for people who collect the little packets of (6) [redacted] you get when you order tea or coffee in a café or restaurant.
- If your dog or cat has fleas, and they are now living in your carpets, put some (7) [redacted] on the carpets and leave it for 12 hours. This kills all the fleas.



- Only 6% of the **(8)** [redacted] used in the USA is used in food; another 17% is used for de-icing roads in the winter months.
- **Sure** and **(9)** [redacted] are the only two words in the English language that begin with 'su' and are pronounced 'sh'.
- Scientists use **(10)** [redacted] to make different kinds of plastic, e.g. for food packaging.
- **(11)** [redacted] removes red wine stains (though probably not from your new white carpet).
- If you eat too much **(12)** [redacted] (about one gram per kilogram of weight), you can die. This was a method of ritual suicide in ancient China.

flea – a very small insect that can jump and that lives on and bites animals and people

Pub quizzes

A pub quiz is a general knowledge quiz held in a pub or bar. They started in the UK in the 1970s, and there are now more than 22,000 weekly quizzes in pubs all over the country. Friends form **teams**, usually of about five or six people, and they decide on a name for their team. The person who asks the questions is called the '**quizmaster**', and the teams write their answers on a piece of paper. You can't use your phone to look for the answers! In some pubs, teams pay to be in the quiz – from about 50p to £5 per person – and the winning team gets the money. But a lot of pub quizzes are free because pubs want people to come on nights which aren't usually busy, like Mondays and Tuesdays.

- A** Choose your team carefully.
- B** Don't **be a bad loser**.
- C** Don't **cheat!**
- D** Enjoy yourself!
- E** Keep your eyes open.
- F** Know about current affairs.
- G** Learn the big names.

Tips for how to win

- 1** That's really what it's all about. And don't take it too seriously.
- 2** Make sure you have friends who are **experts** at different subjects.
- 3** Mobile phones, reference books, newspapers, etc., are not permitted.
- 4** Find out about events in the news, especially politics.



- 5 **Memorize** the winners of recent and past sporting events, Oscars, Grammys, reality TV shows, political elections, etc., as well as the latest singles and album charts.
- 6 Always look out for new facts, wherever you are.
- 7 If you don't **win** the quiz, remember, there is always next time.

The most dangerous place in the world to cross the road

If you want to cross the road in most countries, you wait for a gap in the traffic, and then you cross. But not in Ho Chi Minh City, where there's never a gap in the traffic. Apart from the cars, lorries, bikes, and buses, there are millions of motorbikes and scooters, which are the most popular form of transport in Vietnam. Crossing the road is an adventure, and many tourists find it impossible. So what can you do?

Keep walking. The receptionist at my hotel told me, 'When it feels right, walk into the road. The most important thing to remember is to keep walking. Don't stop. Don't run. Don't look left or right. And don't walk in front of a bus, because they can't stop easily.'

Cross with a local person. They know what they're doing, and this is the safest way for beginners. I looked for a middle-aged local man and I crossed the road with him. I made sure that he was between me and the traffic, and I prayed as I walked next to him. And I got to the other side!

Cross in a group. I met some American students who were happy to walk across the street with me. But this time when I saw a car coming straight at me, I stopped and put up my arm (like a traffic policeman). This was a big mistake.

Find a policeman. There are lovely policemen in green uniforms, and their job is to help frightened tourists to cross the road.

Take a taxi. For one or two dollars they take you anywhere you want to go.

It's written in the cards

Part 1

'Come in,' said a voice. Jane Ross opened the door and went into a small room. There was a man sitting behind a table.

'Good afternoon,' said Jane. 'I want to see Madame Yolanda, the fortune teller.'

'Madame Yolanda is not here today,' said the man. 'But don't worry. I'm going to tell you about your future. What questions do you want to ask?'

Jane looked at the fortune teller. She couldn't see him very well because the room was very dark.

Part 3

He turned over the second card.

'Mm, a house. A new house. You're going to move, very soon, to another country.'

'But my boyfriend works here. He can't move to another country.'

'Let's look at the next card,' said the fortune teller. He turned over the third card.

'A heart. You're going to fall in love.'

'Who with?' asked Jane.

'Let me concentrate. I can see a tall dark man. He's very attractive.'

'Oh, that's Jim,' said Jane.

'Who's Jim? Your boyfriend?'



'No. Jim is a man I met at a party last month. He's an actor, from New York. He says he's in love with me. It was his idea for me to come to Madame Yolanda.'

'Well, the card says that you're going to fall in love with him.'

'Are you sure?' asked Jane. 'But what about my boyfriend?'

'Let's look at the fourth card,' said the fortune teller.

Things I didn't know until I got here

What was a surprise for you when you came to live in America?

Lena from Ukraine

When I eat out with my husband or friends, we usually share, because food portions are huge and we don't want all that food. But you can take home everything you don't eat, and I like that.

In the winter, you often see people in the street or on the subway who are wearing just a T-shirt when it's really cold outside.

Rahim from Pakistan

When people speak to their boss (and to their teachers) they call them by their first name. They do the same to old people too, even when they don't know them well. It doesn't seem polite to me.

Natasha from Belarus

The American President's **salary** is about the same as a doctor's. He isn't the richest person in the country. That surprised me!

Some hospitals are like smart hotels – but a lot of people can't go there because they don't have medical **insurance**. Also, doctors don't always explain everything to their patients in my country. Here, they tell you everything.



Tara from India

I couldn't believe the tipping system, for example, in places like the hairdresser's. You cut my hair and I pay you – a lot! Why do I need to give you a **tip** as well?

Public transport can be dangerous in India. But I was on the subway here in New York, going home late at night, when a group of people got on. They were very loud – I think they were drunk – and we were quite frightened. But at the next stop two police officers got on. The people stopped shouting when they saw the police. I felt really safe.

Julie from Canada

My husband is from Ecuador, and when he first arrived, he was really surprised by his **salary**. As a chef, he could **earn enough money** to **pay bills**, buy food, **pay rent**, have a good social life, and buy luxuries like our Xbox. In Quito, he worked 15 hours a day, and more at the weekend, and he earned half the money.

Bucket list

bucket list noun BrE; NAmE

a list of things that you want to do before you die

Travelling to India is number one on my bucket list.

About me

Hi! I'm Stef, a traveller from **Germany** with a passion for travel, food, and photography.

During my studies, I worked in the **Canary Islands** and in **Argentina** and I studied for two semesters in the **UK**. After I finished, I decided that I didn't want to work for the rest of my life. I was 21 and couldn't imagine sitting in an office for the next 40 years and more. So I decided to go to **Australia** on a working holiday visa. First, I worked for six months in **Germany** because I needed to save some money. I went to **Sydney** at the end of 2011. I spent Christmas on St Kilda Beach in **Melbourne**, I worked in a pub, and then I travelled all over **Australia** and **New Zealand**.

After coming back I got a job as a project assistant in an IT company – an office job. I was happy to have a routine again, but I spent all my holidays travelling – to **Amsterdam, Istanbul, Portugal, Switzerland, Chile, Prague**, and **Morocco**.

Some months passed, but finally I realized what I wanted to do with my life, at least for now. Having experiences is very important to me – more important than working in an office all week to pay for a flat that I hardly ever spend time in, and to buy things I don't really need. Three months ago, I left my job. I decided to work in different jobs, sometimes here, sometimes abroad, sometimes as a volunteer, sometimes for money. I have a lot of dreams and I want to make them come true.



My dreams

At the beginning of every year I make a 'bucket list' of 100 things I would like to do. These are some of them. You can probably do them in your country – you don't need to travel.

- Put a secret in a balloon and let it fly away.
- Go on holiday with my best friend.
- Take a photo every day for a year.
- Learn to windsurf.
- Ride a horse on the beach.
- Learn to play the guitar.
- Learn a new language.
- Read one book every week.
- Run through a field of flowers.
- Learn to dive and take underwater photos.
- Go for a walk in the summer rain.
- Go to a festival or an outdoor concert.
- Explore my hometown.
- Do karaoke.
- Make my best friend's dream come true.
- Do something that scares me.
- Cook all the recipes in a cookbook.
- Get in a taxi and shout 'follow that car'.

Life before the internet



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This morning in the office somebody mentioned ‘teletext’. ‘What’s that?’ our intern Francesca asked. She genuinely had no idea. For all of you who are too young to remember, teletext was sort of like a very, very basic internet on your TV. After that conversation, we started to remember life before the internet. Can you remember any of these?

Fax machines Sending an email is so easy these days, but some years ago, when you needed to send something to somebody urgently and the post was too slow, you sent a fax. When they were introduced in the 1970s people thought they were a technological miracle. ‘You can print something and send it over the phone in seconds! Magic!’

The Yellow Pages If you needed to book an appointment with your hairdresser or phone a local Chinese takeaway, what did you do? You looked up the phone number or address in a big fat yellow book – the Yellow Pages. Amazingly, it still exists online.



Encyclopaedias When you needed information for your studies, or to win an argument, you looked it up in an enormous encyclopaedia – sometimes ten or twelve books of information in alphabetical order. Some people had them at home, or they went to a library.

Walkmans This is how we listened to music. A Walkman was a lot heavier than an MP3 player! And if you didn't have the cassette or CD of a song, you couldn't listen to it.

An A–Z If you had a meeting or job interview, or you wanted to go to a new restaurant in a part of town you didn't know, what did you always take with you? Your A–Z book of maps. And your reading glasses to read the street names, because they were so small!

An interview with Sir Ian McKellen



As Gandalf

A [redacted]

What kind of music do you like? I hardly ever listen to music at home – I prefer going to concerts. I enjoy classical music and pop, but my favourite kind of music is traditional American jazz.

What book are you reading at the moment? I'm reading **The Hammersteins**, a biography of the American theatre family written by Oscar Andrew Hammerstein.

Who's your favourite historical character? Perhaps William Shakespeare.

B [redacted]

What time do you usually get up in the morning? If I am working, I get up one hour before I have to leave the house. If I am not working, and I went to bed late the night before, I get up at about 10.00 in the morning.

How much time do you spend a day on the internet? I can very easily spend three or four hours on the internet, answering emails, reading the news, etc. I think of the internet as a wonderful encyclopaedia of information.

How do you relax? I enjoy a late-night Sudoku, but especially being with friends.

C [redacted]

What's your favourite room in the house? Perhaps the living room where I cook and eat, and from where I can see the River Thames in London.

What do you always have on your desk? I always have too many letters, papers, and books which are waiting for me to read.



Do you have any pets? I love dogs, but I can't have one because I'm often away from home.

D [REDACTED]

What languages do you speak? I only speak English, but I can remember a little of the French I learned at school.

Can you play a musical instrument? No.

Is there something you would like to learn to do? Yes – many things, e.g. to sing well, to play the piano, and to speak foreign languages.

E [REDACTED]

What's your favourite place in London? I love the River Thames and the views from its many bridges.

Where are you going to go for your next holiday? I am going to go to India for the first time in February.

What's the most beautiful city you've ever visited? I can't choose between Edinburgh, Prague, and Venice.

F [REDACTED]

What was your first job? The first money I earned as a professional actor was when I was a student at Cambridge University in 1959. I played small parts in audio recordings of Shakespeare's plays.

When did you first read *The Lord of the Rings*? I read it first when I was preparing to play Gandalf in the movie trilogy.

What was the best and worst thing about filming *The Lord of the Rings*? The best thing about filming was discovering the countryside and people of New Zealand. But the worst thing was living away from home for a year or more.



As Magneto

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