



How To Tell Time In English

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Word / Phrase	IPA	Type	Meaning	Example
What time is it?	/wʌt taɪm ɪz ɪt/	Asking the time	Asks for the current time.	What time is it? I'm late.
Do you have the time?	/duː juː hæv ðə taɪm/	Asking the time	Polite way to ask for the time.	Excuse me, do you have the time?
What's the time?	/wɒts ðə taɪm/	Asking the time	Asks for the current time.	What's the time in London?
oh (in minutes)	/oʊ/	Clock phrase	Used for zero in the minutes part of a time.	It's eight oh five.
o'clock	/əˈklɔːk/	Clock phrase	Used for exact hours with no minutes.	It's three o'clock.
half past	/hæf pæst/	Clock phrase	30 minutes after the hour.	It's half past six.
a quarter past	/əˈkwɔːrtər pæst/	Clock phrase	15 minutes after the hour.	It's a quarter past four.
a quarter after	/əˈkwɔːrtər ˈæftər/	Clock phrase	15 minutes after the hour.	It's a quarter after four.
a quarter to	/əˈkwɔːrtər tuː/	Clock phrase	15 minutes before the next hour.	It's a quarter to ten.
ten past	/tɛn pæst/	Clock phrase	10 minutes after the hour.	It's ten past eight.
ten after	/tɛn ˈæftər/	Clock phrase	10 minutes after the hour.	It's ten after eight.
ten to	/tɛn tuː/	Clock phrase	10 minutes before the next hour.	It's ten to eight.
noon	/nuːn/	Clock phrase	12:00 in the daytime (12:00 p.m.).	Let's meet at noon.
midnight	/ˈmɪdnɑɪt/	Clock phrase	12:00 at night (12:00 a.m.).	The party ends at midnight.
a.m.	/ˌeɪ ˈɛm/	Clock phrase	From midnight to before noon.	The bus arrives at 7:30 a.m.
p.m.	/ˌpiː ˈɛm/	Clock phrase	From noon to before midnight.	The movie starts at 8:00 p.m.
three twelve	/θriː twelv/	Digital time	Hour first, then minutes (3:12).	The meeting is at three twelve.
seven forty-five	/ˈsɛvən ˌfɔːrti ˈfaɪv/	Digital time	7:45 in digital style.	The train leaves at seven forty-five.
nine twenty	/naɪn ˈtwenti/	Digital time	9:20 in digital style.	The class starts at nine twenty.
twelve oh five	/twelv oʊ faɪv/	Digital time	12:05 in digital style.	Lunch is at twelve oh five.
What time does it start?	/wʌt taɪm dʌz ɪt stɑːrt/	Asking the time	Asks for the starting time of an event.	What time does the class start?
What time does it end?	/wʌt taɪm dʌz ɪt ɛnd/	Asking the time	Asks for the finishing time of an event.	What time does the concert end?

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What time are we meeting?	/wʌt taɪm ɑːr wiː 'miːtɪŋ/	Asking the time	Asks about a planned meeting time.	What time are we meeting tomorrow?
in the morning	/ɪn ðə 'mɔːrnɪŋ/	Day part	During the early part of the day, before noon.	The appointment is in the morning.
in the afternoon	/ɪn ði ˌæftər 'nuːn/	Day part	After noon and before evening.	The interview is in the afternoon.
in the evening	/ɪn ði 'iːvɪŋ/	Day part	Late afternoon into early night.	We usually eat dinner in the evening.
at night	/æt naɪt/	Day part	Late hours after evening.	I don't like driving at night.
right on time	/raɪt ɑːn taɪm/	Punctuality	Exactly at the expected time.	The bus arrived right on time.
early	/ˈɜːrli/	Punctuality	Before the expected time.	She arrived early.
late	/leɪt/	Punctuality	After the expected time.	He was late for school.
twenty of (nine)	/ˈtwenti ʌv/	Clock phrase	20 minutes before the next hour (8:40).	It's twenty of nine.
thirteen hundred	/θɜːr'tiːn 'hʌndrəd/	24-hour time	1:00 p.m. in 24-hour spoken form.	The train leaves at thirteen hundred.
fourteen thirty	/ˌfɔːrtiːn 'θɜːrti/	24-hour time	2:30 p.m. in 24-hour spoken form.	Class ends at fourteen thirty.
eighteen fifteen	/ˌeɪ'tiːn ˌfɪf'tiːn/	24-hour time	6:15 p.m. in 24-hour spoken form.	Check-in is at eighteen fifteen.
twenty-one forty-five	/ˌtwenti wʌn ˌfɔːrti 'faɪv/	24-hour time	9:45 p.m. in 24-hour spoken form.	The flight arrives at twenty-one forty-five.
thirteen	/θɜːr'tiːn/	Number word	The number 13.	It's thirteen minutes past two.
thirty	/ˈθɜːrti/	Number word	The number 30.	It's thirty minutes past two.
fifteen	/ˌfɪf'tiːn/	Number word	The number 15.	Fifteen minutes is a quarter of an hour.
fifty	/ˈfɪfti/	Number word	The number 50.	It's fifty minutes past the hour.
twelve	/twelv/	Number word	The number 12.	It's twelve o'clock.
Sunday		Day	The first day of the week in the US.	We rest on Sunday.
Monday		Day	The second day of the week in the US.	School starts on Monday.
Tuesday		Day	The third day of the week.	The meeting is on Tuesday.
Wednesday		Day	The fourth day of the week.	I work late on Wednesday.
Thursday		Day	The fifth day of the week.	Dinner is on Thursday.
Friday		Day	The sixth day of the week.	The party is on Friday night.
Saturday		Day	The seventh day of the week in the US.	We shop on Saturday.
weekday		Day	Monday through Friday.	The store is open on weekdays.
weekend		Day	Saturday and Sunday.	I relax on the weekend.

Word / Phrase	IPA	Type	Meaning	Example
January		Month	The first month of the year.	My birthday is in January.
February		Month	The second month of the year.	February is short.
March		Month	The third month of the year.	Spring starts in March.
April		Month	The fourth month of the year.	It rains a lot in April.
May		Month	The fifth month of the year.	We travel in May.
June		Month	The sixth month of the year.	School ends in June.
July		Month	The seventh month of the year.	July is hot here.
August		Month	The eighth month of the year.	We visit family in August.
September		Month	The ninth month of the year.	Classes start in September.
October		Month	The tenth month of the year.	Halloween is in October.
November		Month	The eleventh month of the year.	Thanksgiving is in November.
December		Month	The twelfth month of the year.	We celebrate in December.
spring		Season	The season after winter.	Flowers bloom in spring.
summer		Season	The warmest season.	We swim in summer.
fall		Season	The season after summer (US).	Leaves change color in fall.
autumn		Season	The season after summer (UK).	It gets cool in autumn.
winter		Season	The coldest season.	It snows in winter.
dawn		Day part	Early morning when the sun rises.	We left at dawn.
sunrise		Day part	The time when the sun comes up.	Sunrise is at 6:15.
midday		Day part	The middle of the day; around noon.	We eat at midday.
sunset		Day part	The time when the sun goes down.	Sunset is beautiful here.
dusk		Day part	The time just after sunset.	The lights turn on at dusk.
tonight		Day part	This evening or night.	Are you free tonight?
today		Relative time	This day; the current day.	What are you doing today?
tomorrow		Relative time	The day after today.	See you tomorrow.
yesterday		Relative time	The day before today.	I called yesterday.
now		Relative time	At this moment.	I need to leave now.
later		Relative time	At a time after now.	We can talk later.
soon		Relative time	In a short time from now.	The bus will arrive soon.
ago		Relative time	Before now (used after a time amount).	She left five minutes ago.

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this morning		Relative time	Earlier today, before noon.	I exercised this morning.
this afternoon		Relative time	Today, after noon.	I have a call this afternoon.
next week		Relative time	The week after this one.	Vacation starts next week.
last week		Relative time	The week before this one.	I was sick last week.
next month		Relative time	The month after this one.	We move next month.
last month		Relative time	The month before this one.	I traveled last month.
in a minute		Relative time	Very soon; in a short time.	I'll be there in a minute.
in an hour		Relative time	One hour from now.	Dinner will be ready in an hour.
second		Time unit	A very short unit of time.	Wait a second.
minute		Time unit	A unit of time equal to 60 seconds.	The meeting is ten minutes long.
hour		Time unit	A unit of time equal to 60 minutes.	The flight is two hours.
day		Time unit	A period of 24 hours.	I work eight hours a day.
week		Time unit	A period of seven days.	I exercise three times a week.
fortnight		Time unit	A period of two weeks.	We visit every fortnight.
month		Time unit	One of the twelve parts of a year.	Rent is due every month.
year		Time unit	A period of 12 months.	She studied English for one year.
decade		Time unit	A period of ten years.	A lot changed in the last decade.
century		Time unit	A period of one hundred years.	That building is over a century old.
always		Frequency	At all times; every time.	She always arrives early.
usually		Frequency	Most of the time.	I usually drink coffee in the morning.
often		Frequency	Many times; frequently.	We often eat out on Fridays.
sometimes		Frequency	At some times but not always.	I sometimes work from home.
rarely		Frequency	Not often; almost never.	He rarely checks email at night.
never		Frequency	At no time; not ever.	I never skip breakfast.
daily		Frequency	Every day.	Take this medicine daily.
weekly		Frequency	Every week.	We have a weekly team meeting.
monthly		Frequency	Every month.	Pay rent monthly.
yearly		Frequency	Every year.	We take a yearly vacation.
every day		Frequency	Each day without exception.	I walk every day.
once a week		Frequency	One time per week.	I go to the gym once a week.

Word / Phrase	IPA	Type	Meaning	Example
twice a month		Frequency	Two times per month.	We visit grandma twice a month.
at (time)		Preposition	Used with exact clock times.	Meet me at 3:30.
on (day)		Preposition	Used with days and dates.	See you on Friday.
in (month/year)		Preposition	Used with months, years, and longer periods.	We met in 2020.
for (duration)		Preposition	Shows how long something lasts.	I waited for twenty minutes.
since		Preposition	From a past point until now.	I have lived here since 2019.
until		Preposition	Up to a specific time.	The store is open until 9 p.m.
by (deadline)		Preposition	No later than a time.	Finish the report by Friday.
during		Preposition	Throughout a period of time.	No calls during the meeting.
appointment		Schedule	A planned meeting at a set time.	I have a dentist appointment at 2.
deadline		Schedule	The latest time something must be done.	The deadline is midnight.
schedule		Schedule	A plan of times for events.	What is your schedule tomorrow?
calendar		Schedule	A chart of days, weeks, and months.	Mark it on the calendar.
duration		Schedule	How long something lasts.	The duration of the film is two hours.
punctual		Punctuality	Arriving at the expected time.	She is always punctual.
on schedule		Punctuality	Happening at the planned time.	The project is on schedule.
ahead of time		Punctuality	Before the expected time.	Please arrive ahead of time.
behind schedule		Punctuality	Later than planned.	The flight is behind schedule.
rush hour		Schedule	Busy traffic time morning and evening.	Avoid driving during rush hour.
business hours		Schedule	Times when a business is open.	Call during business hours.
What day is it?		Asking the time	Asks for the day of the week.	What day is it today?
What date is it?		Asking the time	Asks for the calendar date.	What date is it today?
half an hour		Duration phrase	A period of 30 minutes.	Wait half an hour.
quarter of an hour		Duration phrase	A period of 15 minutes.	It takes a quarter of an hour.