

EVERYDAY ENGLISH

I. Throughout the United States there are areas of large cities that have their own names, for example, Watts in Los Angeles, Beacon Hill in Boston, Lincoln Park in Chicago, and Soho in New York. These parts of the city are called neighbourhoods. Can you name some neighbourhoods in your city ?

Every city has different parts for different reasons. These parts are called districts and there are three kinds of districts: industrial, business and residential. The industrial district contains factories and warehouses. The business district contains stores, offices and banks. The residential district is where people live. There we see houses, schools and churches.

II. Our community. Our community consists of many apartment houses and many stores. It is a residential and business district. On my block there are a bakery, a dry cleaner's, a shoe repair shop, a grocery store and a drug store. Around the corner from my house are the school I attend, the butcher's shop and a laundromat.

The other day I went to the shoe repairer to have him repair two pairs of shoes. They needed heels and soles. I stopped at the grocery store and bought a newspaper. I bought a bottle of orange juice, too.

III. Sanitation Department. Our community is very clean. The sanitation department is very good in our neighbourhood. They pick up the garbage three times a week. They also have mechanical sweepers that come around three times a week. The people who pick up the garbage work very hard. They come around in the garbage truck in all kinds of weather.

We have a group in our block that encourages everyone to put garbage in plastic bags or in garbage cans with lids on them. We don't want litterbugs. We also collect empty plastic bottles and metal cans so that we can recycle them. It is nice to live in a clean community.

IV. The Fire Department. One day my friend and I visited the fire house. The fire fighters were very nice to us. They showed us the fire engines and told us how the equipment worked. I wanted to climb the big ladder. They explained the bell system to us and told us how the fire-alarm box worked. Now, we understand how dangerous it is when somebody rings a false alarm. We also understand how dangerous it is to play with matches.

I think fire fighters are very brave. They rush into burning buildings and rescue people who are trapped. They wear heavy raincoats, thick rubber boots, and helmets. They usually carry axes so that they can break windows and doors to get to fire. It seems like a challenging way to earn a living.

V. Fire Prevention. Last week was Fire Prevention week in school. The Fire Department sent a fire fighter to show us a film on fire safety and to talk to us at our assembly. He spoke to us about keeping the fire escape clear and easy to reach. He also mentioned the use of matches. He warned us never to leave matches where children could reach them. At the end of his talk, he invited us to visit the fire house.

That afternoon we had a fire drill in school. As soon as the gongs sounded, our teacher led us out of the school quickly and quietly. Fire is a dangerous thing, so it is important to know and follow the rules of safety.

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VI. The Postal Service. In the morning a woman in a grey uniform comes to our house to bring the mail. It doesn't matter what the weather is like. She is there every day except Sunday. Her name is Lydia and she works for the U.S. Postal Services. She is a very pleasant mail carrier. Whenever she has an important letter or package for us, she rings the bell.

She knows everybody in the neighbourhood, and everyone knows her. Even the dogs know her and don't bite her. We always meet Lydia on our way to school. She always stops to talk to us.

This afternoon I have to go to the post-office to pick up a package that was sent to us from Puerto Rico. Lydia doesn't deliver big packages. While I'm in the post-office, I'll buy some envelopes, too. The post-office is closed on Sunday, and the mail carrier doesn't come then either.

VII. Getting Around. This is the ground floor of a department store. Below the sign 'Ground Floor' is a men's department. The information desk is to the left of the men's department. To the right is the glove and scarf counter. There is a sale. There are gloves on the counter and in the display case. There are two customers next to the counter. The sales-person is behind the counter. Behind the counter is the fitting room for the lingerie section. Can you find the escalator and the elevator to take you to the other floors? What department is the escalator in front of?

VIII. The Hairdresser's. Many women and men go to the hairdresser's. They like to have their hair cut and styled. First they put on a smock to protect their clothing. Then an assistant washes their hair. A stylist cuts their hair and styles it. Men and women can also have manicures. A manicurist shapes their nails and puts on clear or coloured polish. When the customer is ready to leave they usually tip the assistant, the manicurist, and the stylist.

IX. Three Meals a Day. Breakfast is the first meal of the day. We have juice, toast with butter, eggs, and milk. We can also have cereals. We eat lunch at noon. Some people like to eat hamburgers and French fries. Others like tuna fish or egg salad sandwiches. Many parents give their children peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for lunch. In the U.S. dinner (suooer) is usually the biggest meal of the day. We usually eat dinner at six o'clock in the evening. A large dinner may consist of soup, salad, meat or fish, vegetables, potatoes, dessert, and coffee, tea or milk.

It is important to eat three meals a day. That way we can be strong and healthy.

X. The Supermarket. A supermarket is a large grocery store. There are only a few people there to help you. Sometimes there is a clerk at the meat counter and in the fruit and vegetable section. People walk up and down the aisles pushing shopping charts. They choose their groceries and put them in the cart. All kinds of groceries and paper goods are sold in a supermarket. There are special counters for frozen foods, fruits and vegetables, and dairy products. There are often sales. If tomato paste usually costs 35 cents a can, on sale it may cost 65 cents for two cans. In general, food in the supermarkets is cheaper than it is in small stores.

XI. Fruit. There are many kinds of fruit. Some fruits grow on trees, some on vines, and some on bushes. Most fruits have seeds. If you plant a seed, a new plant will grow from it. Pears, apples, bananas, lemons, pineapples, grapefruits, cherries, oranges, peaches, watermelons, and strawberries are fruits.

When you buy fruit, don't pick pieces that are too ripe or not ripe enough. Don't buy damaged fruit. If you buy fruit that is in season, it will be cheaper. For example, watermelon in winter is very expensive. Many fruits and vegetables spoil very quickly, so don't buy more than you need. Keep them in vegetable bins in your refrigerator. Don't squeeze the fruit because you will damage it.

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XII. Food Day. What are good foods to eat? Good foods are fish, meat, vegetables and fruit, for example. Junk foods are chips, candy, starches and fats. What should we look for when we buy food? We should make sure that there are no dark spots on the fruits or vegetables. Make sure the date on the package of all foods is recent. Compare shops. Look in more than one store. Try to stay away from artificial foods. Buy natural products. Remember, to be healthy we must think about the foods we eat.

XIII. Nutrition. Food gives us energy. It gives us nutrients to grow and to repair our bodies. It gives us carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and water. These nutrients are the body's building blocks. The nutrients must be digested to become a few simple chemicals. This is what gives us energy. This is also what keeps our body temperature at 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit.

XIV. Classes of animals. Tomorrow we will go to the Zoo. At the Zoo we will see many classes of animals. Mammals are animals that are warm-blooded. Their body temperatures are always the same. They develop inside their mothers' milk. Human beings are mammals. We will also see birds. Birds are also warm-blooded. The temperature of their blood changes with the climate. Baby reptiles hatch from eggs and have scaly skin. Snakes and turtles are reptiles. We will see amphibians, too. They can live in water or on land. Frogs are amphibians. Then we will see fish. Fish live in the water. Sharks and whales are different types of fish. Don't be fooled: whales are mammals! We will also see insects such as spiders, ants, and bees. We'll have a good time!

XV. At Night. When the sun goes down, the lights go on. The city never is dark. It is lit by lights of many kinds. There are streetlights, lights from signs, lights in houses, lights in skyscrapers, lights on cars. As night comes, the streets are not empty. They are still filled with people. Many people are on their way to theatres and restaurants. Lines form outside movie theatres. On Friday and Saturday nights, many people are on their way to discotheques. In the summer, people fill the park to listen to concerts. Others sit at sidewalk restaurants and cafes. They eat, drink, talk, and watch the people who are passing by. There are many ways to spend the evening in the city.

XVI. On the Weekend. Josh and Alicia find a lot to do on the weekend. Every Friday afternoon they do their homework. Every Friday night they go to a party with their friends. They dance all evening and come home very tired.

Saturday mornings during the winter, Alicia has band practice, and Josh plays in the basketball team. In the summer they go to the park and play soccer with their friends. They have picnics and listen to concerts in the park. Sometimes there is a play instead of a concert. If they don't go to the park, they go to the beach. There they swim and lie in the sun. Saturday night they go to a movie or a disco with their friends.

On Sundays, they go to museums, or go skating. In the summer they also may spend Sundays in the park or at the beach. They like fresh air. Sometimes they visit their relatives in other parts of the city. Sunday evenings they make sure all their homework is done, and they prepare what they need for school the next day. Josh and Alicia like the city, and they know how to have a good weekend.

XVII. The Dewey Decimal System. You can find books on almost any subject in the library. All libraries have three large divisions: a general book section, a magazine section, and a reference section. Ask at the information desk if you have a question about where to find these sections. Books on the same subject are grouped together: science books are all in one place, history books are all in one place, and so on. Each book is marked with a number. The number indicates the book's subject.

The most popular classification system today is the Dewey Decimal Classification System which has ten major divisions: /.../. All books are put in order on the shelves by their number. This system makes the book you want easy to find. If you are looking for books on a subject but you don't know the name of a particular book, you know where to go. If you want a book on religion, for example, you know you must look in the ones numbered two hundred. Next time you go to the library, things will be easy for you to find.

XVIII. The Card Catalogue. If you want to find a book in the library, you must know its number. In many libraries, you use a computer to find a book's number. In some libraries you can use the card catalogue. If you use a computer, you need to type information to help the computer locate the book. You should follow the instructions that the library has for typing information. If you use a card catalogue, you look up information found on cards. A card catalogue is a cabinet with drawers that contain cards. All the books in the library are listed on cards in the card catalogue. The cards are in alphabetical order. If you see *ma-mo* on a drawer, you may find cards from *macramé* to *Mozart* inside.

Whether you use a computer or a card catalogue, you look for books in the same way. You can look for books by title, author, or subject. You need to find a number that identifies the book. If you want to find a book called 'Ancient Egypt', you need to look for the book by its title. In the card catalogue, you would look under the letter A. This is the letter that begins the first important word in the title. If you know that the author of the book about Egypt is James Bottari, but you don't know the title of the book, you need to look for the book by the author. You would look for the book by using the author's name, Bottari. In the card catalogue you should look under the letter B, the letter that begins the author's last name.

If you're looking for a book about life in ancient Egypt, but you don't know the title or the author, look under the subject. The subject would be Egypt. Under that subject, you might find a number for the book 'Ancient Egypt' by James Bottari. In some card catalogues, there are separate files for the title cards, author cards and subject cards. In other catalogues, all three kinds of cards are filed together. If you see the word *Reference* in the information for a book, you may use the book in the library but you cannot take it home. Usually you will find all the reference books together in one section of the library. Some common reference books are dictionaries and encyclopedias. It is a good idea to talk with your librarian. The librarian will be able to help you find the books you want and tell you about special services in the library.

XIX. Kinds of books. In the library there are too many kinds of books: fiction books and non-fiction books. Most librarians group fiction books in one area and arrange them in alphabetical order by the author's last name. Non-fiction books are put into a different area. Fiction is something that is invented, or made up. An author has invented the events and people in fiction books. They come from the author's imagination. One important kind of fiction book is a novel. Novels tell stories. There are many kinds of novels. For example, science-fiction novels usually tell made-up stories about life in the future or about life on other planets. Short stories, poetry, and plays are other kinds of fiction. Poetry uses words and their sounds in special ways to create pictures and moods. Plays are stories to act out. Non-fiction books are about real people and events. They report facts and things that really happened. For example, books and science, math, and history are non-fiction too. Biographies and stories about people's lives. They are written by other people. Autobiographies are life-stories that people write about themselves. Most libraries also have a separate section for reference books. These are books such as encyclopedias and atlases.

Encyclopedias contain articles about many subjects- about people, places and things. The articles are in alphabetical order. Atlases are books of maps. After you find the book you want in the library, you need to know how to use it. In the front of most non-fiction books. You will find a table of contents. This gives you the name of each chapter and the page number that it begins on.

The table of contents lets you know what topics the book includes. At the back of a non-fiction book, there may be an index. The index is a long list of the subjects in the book. Next to each subject is the page number or numbers on which it is mentioned. An index is in alphabetical order.

XX. News Publications. There are many different kinds of news publications. You can buy many different newspapers and magazines. They came out daily, weekly, or monthly. There are several newspapers that are sold throughout the country. Almost every big city and small town has its own newspaper. In these cities, there may also be community newspapers that tell about events in different [arts of the city. There are magazines and newspapers about almost every subjects or activity you can think of.

XXI. Valentine's Day. February 14 is a special day for honoring sweethearts. This custom is very old. It may go back to roman times when a special festival called the "Lupercalia" was held on February 15. on that day, all young girls put their name in box. Each young man drew out a name to pick his sweetheart for the next year. During the Middle Age February 14 was the day when people believed birds found their mates. The day was set aside to honor all lovers. The people found new ways of celebrating the day. They used to kiss the first-meet. The first young woman they saw that day. By change, this special festival came on St. Valentine's Day. This day honors a Christian saint named Valentine. But the idea of honoring sweethearts has nothing to do with the saint the day is named after. In the 19th century, the custom of sending valentines began. Valentines are pretty decorate cards pieces of paper. These cards are sent to the people you care about the most. Today, Valentine's Day is very popular. People usually send valentines to many friends and relatives, not just to one person.

XXII. George Washington's Birthday. George Washington was born on a plantation in Virginia on February 22, 1732. There are no public schools in Virginia then, so Washington studied at home. He liked to read, ride his horse, fish, and hunt.

When Washington was eleven years old, his family moved to Mount Veron, Virginia. He became a surveyor and helped develop frontier lands.

Washington was a courageous soldier. He become commander in chif of the colonies' troops. On July 4, 1776, the colonies declare their independence. In the war that followed, Washington led the tropes through many long and dangerous battles.

The United States was created after the war. This new country decided to become a democracy. It wrote a constitution and elected a president. The president was George Washington. He helped the new country pay its debts and make laws for a democratic government .

When he stopped working, Washington become a farmer and a businessman. In December, 1799, he caught a bad cold and died son after. Every year we honor his memory with a national holiday on February 22. Washington's picture is on every one-dollar bill and on every quarter, and our nation's capital is named after him.

XXII. April Fools' Day. On April 1, you can play silly tricks on your friends. For example, some people put mechanical mice in a drawer or say that there's a spot on your face when there really isn't. When the trick is finished, the person says „April Fool.” It is a day when many crazy things can happen.

XXIII. Memorial Day. At first, Memorial Day honored the soldiers who died in the Civil War. It is thought that a woman of French origin started this tradition. She probably chose May 30 because that day was the French Memorial Day.

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Today it honors soldiers who died in all wars. It is a legal holiday. It is now celebrated on the last Monday in May. Schools, banks, and post offices are closed. There are military parades and memorial programs. People decorate graves of soldiers with flowers and little American flags. Many people think of Memorial Day as the official start of the summer season.

XXIV. Independence Day. July 4 is America's birthday. On this day, in 1776, the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed. The thirteen colonies no longer belonged to England. Philadelphia was the first city to observe this holiday. People rang the church bells, played music and July 4 became a legal holiday. In most cities today, there are fireworks, picnics, and parades, and many businesses close. It is one of the most fun days of the summer.

XXV. Labor Day. The Knights of Labor, a workers' organization, established this holiday in New York City in 1882. It was felt that working people should be honored. The group held a big parade. In 1887, in United States Department of Labor declared the first Saturday in June a legal holiday. In 1893, Labor Day was changed to the first Monday in September, and it has been that way ever since. This holiday also marks the official end of summer. Schools usually open in the week.

XXVI. Columbus Day. Christopher Columbus was born in Italy in 1451. He always loved boats and the sea. When he grew up, he became a sailor and moved to Portugal. Columbus wanted to reach Asia by sailing west. He thought that the earth was round, and that if he sailed west, he would find a shorter route to India. It was very important to find a quick route to the Orient to bring back the valuable spices and silks that the Europeans liked.

Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand of Spain supplied Columbus with three ships: the *Nina*, the *Piñata*, and the *Santa Maria*. In August 1492, he started out on his trip. On October 12, 1492, he reached the Bahamas.

He called the people there Indians because he believed he was in India. He sailed on and discovered Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Hispaniola, the island shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

We celebrate Columbus Day with a parade and a legal holiday. Schools and banks are closed. If there is a parade in your town, go and see it.

XXVII. Halloween. In England thousands of years ago, the people celebrated *Summer's End*. They thanked the sun for the good harvest. They decorated their huts with fruits and vegetables, such as apples, corn, and pumpkins. Scarecrows in the fields kept the birds from eating their crops.

Even more exciting was the evening before Halloween. On this night people thought that ghosts and witches, black cats, bats, and owls came. The people believed in ghosts and witches. They built fires on the mountains to keep them away.

Today, on October 31, children put on masks. They go from house to house and say "Trick or Treat." Everyone gives them candy, so they don't play tricks. Adults and children often put on costumes and go to Halloween parties. People enjoy carving pumpkins to make jack-o'-lanterns for Halloween.

XXVIII. Election Day. The United States is a democracy. The people choose the U.S. president and vice-president, state governors, city mayors, and all other government leaders.

Election Day is always on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Many people go to the polls to vote. There are two major parties in the United States: the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. There are many other smaller parties.

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What positions will be filled in the elections in your state this year? You can vote if you are an American citizen and are at least eighteen years old.

XXIX. Veterans Day. Veterans Day used to be called “Armistice Day.” It celebrated the end of World War I, November 11, 1918. On that day the Allies and the Germans signed an armistice, or a peace. After World War II, Armistice Day also honored soldiers who served in that war. In 1954, after the Korean War, President Eisenhower changed the name of the holiday to “Veterans Day,” in honor of all the veterans of all the wars.

We celebrate this holiday with parades, speeches, and by placing flowers on the graves of soldiers. There are special ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. Banks, schools, and post offices are closed for the day.

XXX. Thanksgiving. In November 1620, the Pilgrims landed in America. They were cold, tired, and sick from their long trip across the Atlantic Ocean in their ship, the *Mayflower*. They needed houses, so they went to work and cut down trees. The winter was very cold. As a result, many of the Pilgrims died before the summer came. Their food was almost gone.

Luckily, friendly Indians showed them how to catch fish and clams, and showed them where to hunt for deer. Most important of all, the Indians showed Pilgrims how to plant corn, a new food for these Europeans.

In the fall, the Pilgrims harvested their corn crop. They filled baskets with vegetables and more baskets with corn for the coming winter. The Pilgrims were happy and decided on a special day to give thanks for their good fortune. The Indians joined them, and they ate together at long wooden tables. They ate turkey, venison (deer meat), clams, fish, corn bread, cranberry sauce, and many fruits and vegetables. “Thanksgiving,” as they called it, became a tradition, and when Abraham Lincoln became president, he made it a holiday for the whole country. Today, Thanksgiving is celebrated every year on the fourth Thursday in November.