

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60683-7 – Common Mistakes at Proficiency...and How to Avoid Them

Julie Moore

Excerpt

[More information](#)

# 1 Will or would?

## 1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

- 1 a Everything will be much quicker when we will get the new computer system.  
 b Everything will be much quicker when we get the new computer system.
- 2 a I promised Mum I'd go straight home after the concert.  
 b I promised Mum I'll go straight home after the concert.

We use *will* to talk about future possibilities or predictions which we believe will happen, especially based on an existing situation or evidence:

*If you don't water the plants, they'll die.* (it's a certain fact)

*My journey to work will be much easier when the new tram line opens.* (the line is already being built, so the consequences are quite certain)

☆ We only use *will* to talk about the possibility or prediction, not in the *if / when* clause. (not ~~*when the new tram line will open*~~)

We use *would* to describe hypothetical possibilities which are uncertain, unlikely or impossible, often based on situations which do not yet exist or can never exist:

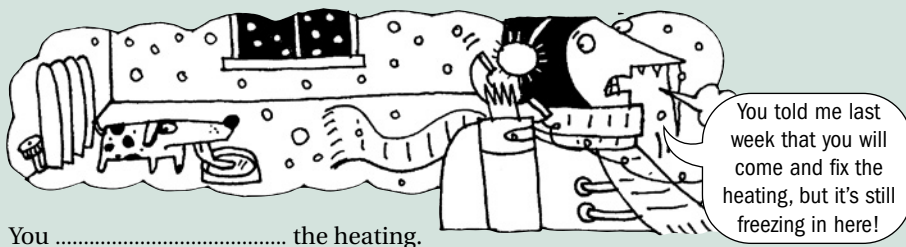
*I'd buy more organic products if they weren't so expensive.* (but they are expensive)

*In my opinion, it would be disastrous to let this project go ahead.* (no decision has been made yet, so the consequences are only a possibility)

We also use *would* to talk about a time in the future from a point in the past:

*They planned that they would meet at midnight.*

## 2 Correct the mistake below.



## 3 Underline the correct form to complete each sentence.

- 1 It *will be / would be* nice to go away for longer, but I can't get more time off work.
- 2 She told me she *will call / would call* if there was a problem.
- 3 If this rain *continues / will continue* much longer, the river will flood.
- 4 Based on current estimates, the number of mobile phone users *will double / would double* in the next five years.
- 5 Dave *will be / would be* furious if he knew what you'd done.
- 6 If everything *goes / will go* to plan, we'll have everything finished by Friday.
- 7 He promised he *will be / would be* back in time for my birthday.
- 8 More people would use public transport if the services *were / would be* more reliable.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60683-7 – Common Mistakes at Proficiency...and How to Avoid Them

Julie Moore

Excerpt

[More information](#)

## 2 Which modal do I use?

### 1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

- 1 a If you like Impressionist art, you should visit the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.  
 b If you like Impressionist art, you have to visit the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.
- 2 a I think that children should respect their parents.  
 b I think that children *must* respect their parents.

We use *should* to talk about what we think is right, best or correct:

*I don't think people **should** keep big dogs in small apartments.*

We use *have to* to talk about what is necessary or compulsory:

*Do young men **have to** do military service in your country?*

We also use *must* to talk about what is necessary or compulsory, especially when the subject of the verb is not a person or when the main verb is passive:

*All applications **must be** received by 31 January.*

☆ In the negative, *mustn't* means 'not allowed', but *don't have to* means 'not necessary':

*The cheque **must not** exceed the value of the guarantee card.*

*EU citizens **don't have to** get a visa to travel to the US.*

We use *must* to talk about what we are sure is true. The opposite is *can't*:

*She **must be** bored at home all day on her own.*

*You **can't be** tired – you've only just got up!*

### 2 Correct the mistake below.



Luggage ..... unattended.

### 3 Complete the following sentences using an appropriate modal verb.

- 1 All children under 12 ..... be accompanied by an adult.
- 2 There's a free 30-day trial period, so you ..... pay anything for the first month.
- 3 I missed the last train and ..... get a taxi home.
- 4 We ..... need more sugar already – I only bought some last week.
- 5 All accidents ..... be recorded in the incident book.
- 6 Have you seen their house? They ..... have a lot of money.
- 7 That cut looks really bad – I think you ..... go to hospital.
- 8 You ..... lift the lid while the rice is cooking or all the steam will be released and it won't cook properly.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60683-7 – Common Mistakes at Proficiency...and How to Avoid Them

Julie Moore

Excerpt

[More information](#)

## 3 Which nouns and adjectives are followed by a gerund or an infinitive?

### 1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

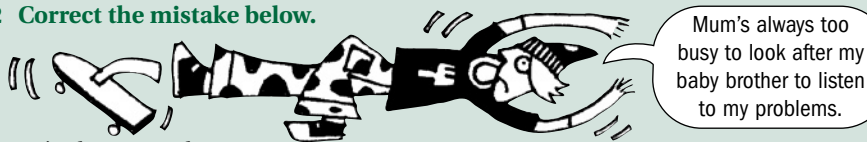
- 1 a As a disabled person, he has difficulty getting on and off buses.  
b As a disabled person, he has difficulty to get on and off buses.
- 2 a I'm used to eating my main meal at midday.  
b I'm used to eat my main meal at midday.

Many words are followed by a verb in either the gerund (*-ing*) or infinitive (*to do*) form. You can check which patterns a word is used with by looking at the examples in a good learner's dictionary. The following are some common combinations:

- noun + *to do* (something)  
*have the ability / confidence / courage to do* (something):  
*He didn't have the **confidence to speak up** about what he'd witnessed.*
- noun (+ preposition) + gerund  
*fear of doing* (something), *have difficulty in doing* (something):  
*He lived in constant **fear of being found out**.*
- adjective + *to do* (something)  
*be right / wrong to do* (something), *be lucky / fortunate to do* (something)  
*be happy to do* (something) (= *willing to do something*):  
*I'm **happy to pick Jamie up** if you're busy.*
- adjective + gerund  
*be used to doing* (something), *be busy doing* (something), *be worth doing* (something):  
*The vineyards **are well worth visiting**.*

☆ See Unit 29 for verb + verb combinations.

### 2 Correct the mistake below.



Mum's always too busy .....

### 3 Use the words below (in the same order) to create sentences. Add any necessary prepositions or articles, and put the verbs in an appropriate form.

- 1 He / have / terrible / fear / travel / by / plane .....
- 2 She / be / right / tell / boss / about / problem .....
- 3 He / have / ability / play / highest / level / the / sport .....
- 4 We / have / difficulty / find / parking / space .....
- 5 It / be not / worth / cook / full / meal / for / one / person .....
- 6 I / feel / lucky / have / such / good / friends .....
- 7 He / not / have / courage / tell / her / face to face .....
- 8 He / be / not / used to / get up / so / early .....

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60683-7 – Common Mistakes at Proficiency...and How to Avoid Them

Julie Moore

Excerpt

[More information](#)

# TEST 1

## 1 Complete the text using *should, shouldn't or have to*.

### Guidelines for travellers



Before you travel: You [1] ..... check whether the country you are visiting has any visa requirements. To visit some countries you may [2] ..... apply for a visa in advance. You [3] ..... make sure that you have adequate travel insurance in case you need urgent medical treatment or, in extreme cases, [4] ..... be flown home.

In the air: The atmosphere inside an aircraft can cause dehydration, so you [5] ..... increase your fluid intake. You [6] ..... , however, drink a lot of alcohol or caffeine. To avoid the effects of jet leg, you [7] ..... try to sleep on the flight, especially if it's an eastbound journey. If you [8] ..... take regular medication, you [9] ..... take your normal dosage according to 'home time'.

## 2 Complete the sentences using the verb in brackets.

### Example:

- Yesterday: 'So, I'll see you outside the cinema at 8 o'clock tomorrow evening.'
- Now: We arranged that we *would meet outside the cinema* at 8. (*meet*)
- 1 January: 'I'll give up smoking this year.'
- Now: At the start of the year, I resolved that I ..... . (*stop*)
- 2 Last night: 'I'll give you a call when I arrive at the airport.'
- Now: She said she ..... at the airport. (*call*)
- 3 20 years ago: 'When I grow up, I'll have lots of children.'
- Now: When I was young, I imagined that ..... a big family. (*have*)
- 4 January: 'The building work should be finished by the end of March.'
- April: We thought that the building work ..... by now. (*finish*)
- 5 Last week: 'Don't worry, I'll bring some sleeping bags.'
- Now: 'Where are the sleeping bags? You said you ..... them.' (*bring*)
- 6 1950s: 'In 50 years' time, people will be living on the moon.'
- Now: Experts predicted that people ..... on the moon by now. (*live*)
- 7 Tuesday: 'We'll probably be back in a couple of days.'
- Sunday: We didn't think the trip ..... this long. (*take*)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60683-7 – Common Mistakes at Proficiency...and How to Avoid Them

Julie Moore

Excerpt

[More information](#)**3 Underline the most appropriate form of the verb to complete the horoscope.****Aries: 21 March – 19 April**

The planet Mars is moving into your sign this week giving you the confidence (1) *to push / of pushing* ahead with career plans. If you've been hoping for a promotion at work, the next few days (2) *would bring / will bring* good news. For those of you disillusioned with your job, now is the time when you (3) *must / should* consider looking for something new – you have the ability (4) *to go / of going* right to the top and you don't (5) *have to / must* put up with second best. If your current boss is too busy (6) *to worry / worrying* about his own position to notice your achievements, you (7) *should / would be* looking for an organisation where you can realise your full potential. You might (8) *be / have to* wait a while for the right opportunity to make your move, but be patient; the wait (9) *will be / would be* well worth it!

**4 Complete the sentences using the correct form of an appropriate verb.****Cricket star banned for six months**

Cricketer John Wilson received a 6-month ban yesterday for failing to take a routine drugs test. The 36-year-old star says it was a simple mistake, but the authorities insist that all players must co-operate with random testing or face the consequences. What do you think? Have your say ...

'I think he's lucky not (1) ..... a longer ban. It isn't worth (2) ..... a random drug testing program if players can just ignore the tests.'

'All sportsmen are role models for young people and they should take their responsibilities more seriously. Surely it (3) ..... that difficult to remember to go for a simple test! The authorities are right (4) ..... him as a warning to other top players that no one is above the rules.'

'I think a 6-month ban is too much. If he'd been found guilty (5) ..... drugs, then that'd be different. But he just made a stupid mistake and I think it's wrong (6) ..... him so harshly.'

'Drugs in sport is a serious problem and the sports authorities have to have the courage (7) ..... the rules. If a top team are unlucky enough (8) ..... one of their best players for a season, I think that's a price worth (9) .....'

**5 The text below contains six errors. Find them and correct them.**

Sweatshop labour is a problem in many countries. At one factory we visited, workers should work for 12 hours a day in a noisy, cramped workshop. The workers say nothing about conditions for fear to lose their jobs. Many families have difficulty to earn enough money to survive and many people are happy accepting jobs many miles from their homes. Valentina must travel 3 hours a day to get to work and back. She says that the government has to do something to improve conditions for workers like her, but she doesn't believe that things will change quickly.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60683-7 – Common Mistakes at Proficiency...and How to Avoid Them

Julie Moore

Excerpt

[More information](#)

## 4 Which, who or what?

### 1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

- 1 a The living room has a big open fire, which makes it really warm and cosy.  
 b The living room has a big open fire, what makes it really warm and cosy.
- 2 a He has three brothers which are older than him.  
 b He has three brothers who are older than him.

*Who* and *which* are used to refer back to something from the first part of a sentence. *Who* refers to people and *which* to things, places or organisations:

Do you know **the guy who lives next door**?

I work for **an organisation which helps homeless people find work**.

*What* is used to refer to something unknown:

Do you know **what's in the box**?

A defining relative clause defines exactly who or what you are talking about. *Who* or *which* can be replaced by *that* or sometimes dropped altogether:

That's the man **who** I saw running away from the accident.

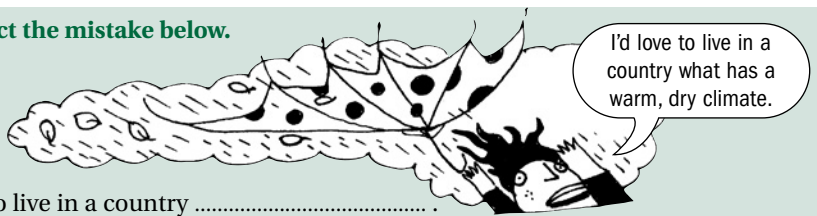
That's the man (**that**) I saw running away from the accident.

A non-defining relative clause, separated by commas, gives extra information:

Our apartment, **which faces east, gets the sun in the morning**.

*Which* can't be dropped or replaced by *that*, as it would then become a defining relative clause, e.g. *Our house that faces east gets the sun in the morning.* (we have several houses and this one faces east)

### 2 Correct the mistake below.



### 3 Make the following sentences sound more natural using *who*, *which* or *what*.

**Example:** They have a very heavy workload. <sup>which</sup> A heavy workload can lead to stress.

- There are many students. These students can't afford to pay such high fees.
- We're lucky to live in this country. This country has free basic healthcare.
- The book has two main characters. These characters are very different.
- He hasn't explained the thing he wants me to do.
- I stayed with a lovely family. This family live in an old farmhouse.
- People are living longer. This means that the state has to pay more in pensions.
- Do you know the thing he plans to do when he finishes college?
- My uncle gave me some helpful advice about loans. My uncle is a bank manager.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60683-7 – Common Mistakes at Proficiency...and How to Avoid Them

Julie Moore

Excerpt

[More information](#)

## 5 Which pronoun do I use to refer to people in general?

### 1 Tick the more natural sentence in each pair.

- 1 a I think that *you* should stand up for what *you* believe in.  
b I think that *one* should stand up for what *one* believes in.
- 2 a If a student has a problem, *he* should see his personal tutor first.  
b If students have a problem, *they* should see their personal tutor first.

As English does not have a neutral third person singular pronoun, we have to find other ways of referring to an unknown or theoretical third person.

*One* can be used to refer to people in general. However, it is now becoming slightly old-fashioned and is normally used only in formal written contexts:

*Such difficulties are not surprising when **one** considers the size of the task at hand.*

We use *you* to refer to people in general or to any person in a hypothetical situation:

*If **you** want to succeed in business, **you** need confidence and determination.*

*He* used as a neutral pronoun is old-fashioned and considered sexist by some people.

We sometimes use *they* as a neutral singular pronoun. Some people consider this incorrect in written English, but it is becoming more accepted and can be used in exams.

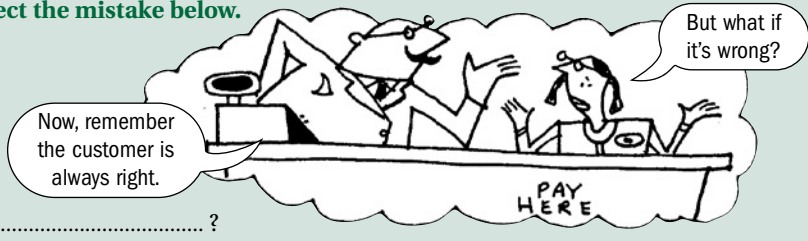
*What's the first thing *you* should say to **a customer** when **they** walk into the office?*

Other words used to describe people in general include *anyone*, *someone*, *people*:

*It's easy to understand how **anyone** would get frustrated in that situation.*

*If **someone** retires at the age of 60, **they** will receive a full state pension.*

### 2 Correct the mistake below.



### 3 Complete the text using appropriate pronouns.

Christmas can be difficult if you think of (1) ..... as a friend to the environment. No one wants to spend the festive season wringing (2) ..... hands about all the paper wasted on cards or unnecessary plastic toys. But there are ways that (3) ..... can enjoy it without denting (4) ..... eco-friendly conscience. If (5) ..... look around, there are plenty of eco-presents to be found, especially recycled ones. Anyone will be delighted to receive a diary which (6) ..... know was produced from recycled paper or a mouse mat made from old car tyres. Or for the really green friend, (7) ..... could always arrange to have a tree planted in (8) ..... name.



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60683-7 – Common Mistakes at Proficiency...and How to Avoid Them

Julie Moore

Excerpt

[More information](#)

## 6 Which personal pronoun do I use?

### 1 Tick the correct sentence in each pair.

- 1 a We all really enjoyed *ourselves* at the party.  
 b We all really enjoyed *ourselves* at the party.
- 2 a Shall I book a table? How many people are we?  
 b Shall I book a table? How many of us are there?

We use the reflexive pronoun *ourselves* to refer to a group of people we are part of:  
*We'd be fooling ourselves if we said it was going to be an easy match.*

We use *yourself* to talk to one person and *yourselves* to address a group of people:  
*Why don't you ask him yourself?* (when talking to one person)  
*You should count yourselves lucky that no one was badly hurt.* (to several people)

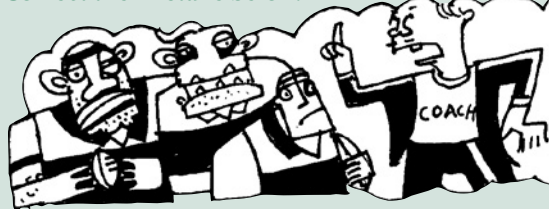
We use *themselves* to refer to a group of people we are not part of:  
*The children prepared everything themselves.*

We can also use *themselves* to refer to an unknown or theoretical person:  
*What should you do if someone falls and hurts themselves?*

☆ See unit 5 on use of *they* for third person singular.

When we talk about the number of people in a group, we use *of us / them*:  
*There are eight of us, so we'll have to go in two taxis.* (not ~~*we are eight people*~~)

### 2 Correct the mistake below.



Any players who ..... will be sent straight home.

### 3 Complete the sentences with an appropriate personal pronoun.

- 1 'There was a loud bang and everyone threw ..... to the ground.'
- 2 We've done a good job and we can all be proud of .....
- 3 You should always warm up before exercise so that you don't injure .....
- 4 The boys found ..... in a dangerous situation.
- 5 We couldn't play a proper match because there weren't enough of .....
- 6 Make sure you all leave ..... enough time to get to the station.
- 7 You need to ask ..... what's more important, your job or your family.
- 8 The government have left ..... open to criticism.



# TEST 2

**1 Complete the comments below using *which, who or what*.**

- 1 This is the couple ..... owned the guesthouse where we stayed.
- 2 This is the beach ..... we looked out onto.
- 3 Here's a picture of the little beach stall ..... sold fried chicken.
- 4 And this is Sylvia ..... ran the stall.
- 5 You saw these flowers everywhere. I don't know ..... they were, but they were so lovely and colourful.
- 6 This is Nicolaos, ..... was our guide when we went turtle-watching.
- 7 And this is the turtle we saw ..... had come up onto the beach to lay eggs.
- 8 This is one of the local fishermen – I can't remember ..... his name was.



**2 Rewrite the sentences replacing the pronoun *one* with the word in brackets, making any other necessary changes.**

- 1 One must play one's part in helping protect the environment. (*everyone*)  
 .....
- 2 One should respect the local customs of the country one is visiting. (*tourists*)  
 .....
- 3 If one promises to do something, one shouldn't go back on one's promise. (*you*)  
 .....
- 4 When one enters a mosque, one is expected to remove one's shoes. (*someone*)  
 .....
- 5 If one is found guilty of a crime, one has to accept the punishment. (*person*)  
 .....

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60683-7 – Common Mistakes at Proficiency...and How to Avoid Them

Julie Moore

Excerpt

[More information](#)**3 Complete the text with one of the pronouns from the box.****Some are used more than once and some may not be used.**

who	what	which	you
they	themselves	ourselves	yourself

I come from quite a large family. I've got two brothers and two sisters (1) ..... are all older than me. People say that if (2) ..... 're the youngest child, (3) ..... get spoilt, but I don't agree. What (4) ..... don't realise is that as the youngest, (5) ..... always have a lot to live up to, and (6) ..... 're always trying to be as good as your older siblings.

In my case, this was always going to be a tough task. My sister Sharon, (7) ..... 's the oldest, went to medical school and is now a cardiac surgeon. My two brothers, Luke and Andrew, set (8) ..... up in business a few years ago and now run a successful Internet advertising agency (9) ..... has offices in London, Paris and New York. My other sister, (10) ..... 's a talented linguist, works for the United Nations and travels all over the world.

As a child, family friends would always ask me (11) ..... I wanted to do and I would shrug my shoulders. Thankfully, my parents have a great attitude. They always told us not to worry about what other people think and encouraged us just to be (12) ..... They just want us all to be happy whatever we're doing.

**4 There are eight mistakes in the text. Find and correct them.**

I work for a charity what helps people which are homeless. Homeless people need more than a roof over his head. He may require support for mental health problems, addictions, lack of self-confidence or skills. We have developed a range of programmes who help homeless people to develop your self-confidence and skills and reintegrate into society. Our practical approach helps people to find safe, long-term accommodation and provides the support one needs to rebuild one's life.

**5 Complete the sentences using the correct form of the verbs in the box.**

enjoy yourself	find yourself	take care of yourself	be yourself
please yourself	lock yourself out	express yourself	

- The boys climbed over a wall and ..... in an apple orchard.
- In the interview, you should just try to relax and .....
- The children are encouraged to ..... through painting.
- Hey, stop talking about work! We're on holiday and we're meant to be here to .....
- The caretaker has a spare set of keys in case any of the students .....
- Mum, will you stop worrying! Helen and I are old enough to .....
- Dinner's at 8 o'clock, but there's nothing planned for the afternoon, so you can all ..... until then.