

PHRASES TO EXPRESS ABILITY AND EDUCATION

ABILITY

English speakers use 'at' to express their ability for something with '**to be good, bad, terrible, great at something.**'

'I am good at history but terrible at geography.'

To find + gerund + easy, difficult, hard.

'She finds singing easy but dancing hard.'

To be a talented + occupation.

'He is a talented painter.' *'She is a talented lawyer.'*

To have the right skillset for something.

'We should give the contract to them. They have the right skillset for this job.'

To be a piece of cake – saying to say that something is very easy.

'Don't worry. Navigating this computer system is a piece of cake.'

It's not rocket science – another way to say something is very easy.

'It's alright, I can check the car tyre pressure. It's not rocket science!'

EXAMS

To pass/ to fail an exam.

To take an exam – to 'do' an exam.

To retake an exam – to 'do' an exam again because you failed last time.

'He has to retake his psychology exam in order to pass to the next year.'

To pass an exam with flying colours – a popular phrase to express that someone has passed an exam with very good marks (UK).

To ace an exam – a popular phrase to express that someone has passed an exam with very good marks (US).

'My son passed his finals with flying colours.' *'What? Oh, in the USA we say he aced his exam.'*

To scrape by in an exam – to pass with the minimum mark.

'I hate chemistry. I thought I was going to fail but I just scraped by.'

To fail an exam miserably – to get terrible marks and fail.

'How did you do?' 'I failed miserably. Let's go to the pub.'

To get a result, mark, driver's licence.

'Rebecca got her driver's licence at 18. She finds driving a piece of cake.'

To mark an exam – to 'correct' an exam and give it a final score.

'It takes two weeks to mark all the students' exam sheets.'

To cheat in an exam – to 'copy' someone in an exam.

'My cousin got caught cheating in his final year exam and so they failed him.'

To revise for an exam – to review and memorise the subject in order to get a good mark in the exam.

Revision (noun).

'I revised a lot for my French exam and it paid off. I got 85%'

To get stuck on a problem – when you can't solve a problem and need help (not, 'to be blocked on a problem').

'We're stuck on this software problem. We need help from the developer.'

SUBJECTS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor of Arts (BA) – a linguistic, humanities or artistic degree.

Bachelor of Science (BSc) – a science, maths, engineering or technology degree.

Curriculum – what you will learn from each subject.

A degree – your qualification when you complete a university course.

A Masters of Arts (MA) – a two year post graduate degree.

A Masters of Science (MSc) – a two year post graduate degree.

Subjects – the 'topics' you take during the course.

Qualifications – the general word for a person's academic achievements (not 'titles').

MATRICULATION

To apply for a course – to send an application to a university to see if you will be accepted.

Application (noun).

'I applied to four universities. I was accepted into the course that I wanted and so I have just enrolled.'

To enrol – to ‘matriculate’ for a course.

Enrolment (noun).

‘My daughter has just enrolled in a BSc in engineering. Afterwards she might do an MSc.’

Tuition fees – the money you pay to do a course.

‘Fees are going up and up. It’s terrible for young people.’

OUT-OF-SCHOOL EDUCATION

To train someone – short courses to train someone to do a job (not ‘to form.’)

Training (noun).

Vocational training – education to train someone to do a particular job (often this starts at 16 years’ old).