

# There . . . and It . . .

## A

### There and it



There's a new restaurant on Main Street.

Yes, I know. I went there last night. It's very good.



We use **there** when we talk about something for the first time, to say that it exists:

- There's a new restaurant on Main Street. (*not* A new restaurant is on Main Street)
- The trip took a long time. There was a lot of traffic. (*not* It was a lot of traffic)
- Things are more expensive now. There has been a big increase in the cost of living.

**It** = a particular thing, place, fact, situation, etc. (but see also Section C):

- We went to the new restaurant. It's very good. (*it* = the restaurant)
- I wasn't expecting them to come. It (= that they came) was a complete surprise.

Compare **there** and **it**:

- I don't like this town. There's nothing to do here. It's a boring place.

Note that **there** can also mean *to/at/in that place*:

- The new restaurant is very good. I went there (= to the restaurant) last night.
- When we got to the party, there were already a lot of people there (= at the party).

## B

You can say **there will be**, **there must be**, **there used to be**, etc.:

- Will there be many people at the party?
- "Is there a flight to Miami this evening?" "There might be. I'll call the airport."
- If people drove more carefully, there wouldn't be so many accidents.

You can also say **there must have been**, **there should have been**, etc.:

- There was a light on. There must have been somebody at home.

Compare **there** and **it**:

- They live on a busy street. There must be a lot of noise from the traffic.  
They live on a busy main street. It must be very noisy.
- There used to be a movie theater on Main Street, but it closed a few years ago.  
That building is now a supermarket. It used to be a movie theater.

You can also say **there is sure/certain/likely to be** something:

- There is sure to be a flight to Miami this evening.

## C

We also use **it** in sentences like this:

- It's dangerous to walk in the street. (*It* = to walk in the street)

It is unusual to say "To walk in the street is dangerous." Normally we begin with **It**:

- It didn't take us long to get here. (*It* = to get here)
- It's too bad (that) Sandra can't come to the party. (*It* = that Sandra can't come)
- Let's go. It's not worth waiting any longer. (*It* = waiting any longer)

We use **it** to talk about distance, time, and weather:

- It's a long way from here to the airport.
- It's been a long time since I last saw you.
- What day is it today?
- It was windy. (*but* There was a cold wind.)

# Exercises

**81.1** Put in *there is/was* or *it is/was*. Some sentences are questions (*is there ... ? / is it ... ?* etc.) and some are negative (*isn't/wasn't*).

1. The trip took a long time. *There was* \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of traffic.
2. What's the new restaurant like? *Is it* \_\_\_\_\_ good?
3. "\_\_\_\_\_ a bookstore near here?" "Yes, \_\_\_\_\_ one on Hill Street."
4. When we got to the movie theater, \_\_\_\_\_ a line outside. \_\_\_\_\_ a very long line, so we decided not to wait.
5. I couldn't see anything. \_\_\_\_\_ completely dark.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ trouble at the soccer game last night. They had to call the police.
7. How far \_\_\_\_\_ from Hong Kong to Taipei?
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Keith's birthday yesterday. We had a party.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ too windy to play tennis this morning. Let's play tomorrow instead.
10. I wanted to visit the museum, but \_\_\_\_\_ enough time.
11. "\_\_\_\_\_ time to leave?" "Yes, \_\_\_\_\_ almost midnight."
12. A few days ago \_\_\_\_\_ a storm. \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of damage.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ anything on TV, so I turned it off.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ an accident on Main Street, but \_\_\_\_\_ very serious.

**81.2** Read the first sentence, and then write a sentence beginning with *There ...*

1. The roads were busy today. *There was a lot of traffic* \_\_\_\_\_.
2. This soup is very salty. *There* \_\_\_\_\_ in the soup.
3. The box was empty. \_\_\_\_\_ in the box.
4. The movie was very violent. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The shopping mall was very crowded. \_\_\_\_\_

**81.3** Complete the sentences. Use *there will be / there would be*, etc. Choose from:

will might ~~would~~ wouldn't should used to (be) going to

1. If people drove more carefully, *there would be* \_\_\_\_\_ fewer accidents.
2. "Do we have any eggs?" "I'm not sure. \_\_\_\_\_ some in the fridge."
3. I think everything will be OK. I don't think \_\_\_\_\_ any problems.
4. Look at the sky. \_\_\_\_\_ a storm.
5. "Is there a school in this village?" "Not now. \_\_\_\_\_ one, but it closed."
6. People drive too fast on this road. I think \_\_\_\_\_ a speed limit.
7. If people weren't aggressive, \_\_\_\_\_ any wars.

**81.4** Are these sentences right or wrong? Change *it* to *there* where necessary.

1. They live on a busy road. It must be a lot of noise. *There must be* \_\_\_\_\_
2. Last winter it was very cold, and it was a lot of snow. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I wish it was warmer. I hate cold weather. \_\_\_\_\_
4. It used to be a church here, but it was torn down. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Why was she so unfriendly? It must have been a reason. \_\_\_\_\_
6. It's a long way from my house to the nearest store. \_\_\_\_\_
7. "Where can we park the car?" "Don't worry. It's sure to be a parking lot somewhere." \_\_\_\_\_
8. After the lecture it will be an opportunity to ask questions. \_\_\_\_\_
9. I like the place where I live, but it would be nicer to live by the ocean. \_\_\_\_\_
10. I was told that it would be somebody to meet me at the airport, but it wasn't anybody. \_\_\_\_\_