



Giving Advice

The language function, **giving advice** is very useful in IELTS, both in the Writing and the Speaking Tests, as well of course in everyday English.

In the Speaking Test, the examiner might ask you for advice on issues and topics covered in the interview. What advice would you give? How would you respond and what language choices would you have?

There are several language choices for the language function of giving advice, and some times these choices affect how chosen words are pronounced.

Many English proverbs can be used for giving advice also.

Study Tip

Learn a couple of different ways to give advice so that you have variety in your language and don't have to use the same structures or language patterns too often.

It is interesting and useful too to learn some common English proverbs.

Native speakers of English often include proverbs in their speech. However, make sure you use the proverbs you learn correctly and appropriately!

Giving Advice

Here are several language choices for the language function **giving advice**.

Language Choices	Examples
Verbs and Nouns	I advise; What I suggest is My advice is; My suggestion would be
Modal Verbs	should, should not (shouldn't); ought, ought not (oughtn't)
Conditionals	If this happens, then Should you need any further assistance, please do not hesitate to ask one of the stewards.
Imperatives	Stop! Listen! Eat well! Don't forget to relax! Put your pen down! Open your test book! Don't go near the fire! Don't touch! Stand clear of the fire! Mind the gap! Beware of the dog!

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Verb, Noun and Infinitive Choices

The simplest language choice is words meaning **advice** (noun) and **advise** (verb).

Of course we can simply use verbs and nouns meaning **advise** or **advice**, as well as **need**, **necessary** and **necessity**.

There are several nouns and verbs in English which can be used for giving advice.

Language Choices	Examples
Verbs	<p>to advise, to suggest, to need</p> <p>The doctor advised that I take a week off work. What I suggest is that you practise for 2 hours every day. You need to slow down and take a break. If you don't want another heart attack, you need to loose weight.</p>
Nouns	<p>advice, suggestion, necessity</p> <p>My advice to you is to take a week off work. The counsellor made a good suggestion. Make a study plan.</p>
Adjectives	<p>advisable, necessary</p> <p>It is advisable to wear a hat in summer. When travelling on the train it is necessary to buy a ticket.</p>

Note: Pronunciation

Voicing* is used in English to distinguish word forms.

Voiceless /s/ (Noun/Adjective)	Voiced /z/ (Verb/Adjective)
abuse abusive	abuse
advice	advise advisable
close	close
choice	choose
excuse	excuse excusable
glass glassy	glaze
grass grassy	graze
use	use usable
ˈrefuse	reˈfuse

***NB: Voicing** means amount of vibration from the vocal cords. Consonants in English can be either **voiced** or **voiceless**. **Voiceless** means more breath, less vibration. **Voiced** means more vibration, less breath. For example /p/ & /b/; /f/ & /v/; /t/ & /d/.



	Labial	Fricative	Dental		Alveolar		Velar
Voiceless	/p/	/f/	/t/	/θ/	/s/	/ʃ/	/k/
Voiced	/b/	/v/	/d/	/ð/	/z/	/ʒ/	/g/

Using Modals

The Modal Verbs **should** and **ought** can be used in English for giving advice.

Ought is a more formal choice and is more commonly used in British English, less in Australian and American English.

For example:

You look tired. You **should** lie down and have a rest.

You have been sick for over a week. You really **ought** to see a doctor.

He was out late last night when he really **ought** to have been studying.

You **ought** to go to bed early.

You really **ought** to look after yourself!

Note:

The Modal verb **ought** is followed by the infinitive form of the verb with **to**. However, the Modal verb **should** is followed directly by the verb without **to**.

should + verb

ought + **to** + verb

The Modal **must** is **not** used for giving advice but rather for giving orders! There is no choice when we use **must** – it is an obligation. **Must** is **not** appropriate for giving advice.

We can express advice in a negative way.

Negative form: **should** + not + verb

ought + not + (to) + verb

In the negative structure for the modal verb **ought**, “to” is not required.



The negative “not” is usually contracted in speech – **shouldn't** and **oughtn't** are commonly heard in spoken English.

For example: To stay healthy, we **shouldn't** overeat. We shouldn't smoke and we **shouldn't** drink too much alcohol.

You **oughtn't** (to) speak like that to your parents.

Using Conditionals

The Second Conditional is used in English for giving advice.

Second Conditional **if ..., then**

For example: **If** we have a good diet, lead an active life and get enough sleep, **then** we should stay healthy.

The Past form of the Modal **shall (should)** is used, because the structure is a Second Conditional structure, following **if – If we have a good diet, then....**

The negative form is also used – **shouldn't**.

For example: **If** you want to be fresh and alert for the test, you **shouldn't** stay up late the night before. Get a good night's sleep, and wake up early.

Notice that when using Conditional structures, we can include **then** for the second part, or we can omit this word.

For example: **If** we get sick, **then** we need to manage our recovery.

If we have a good diet, lead an active life and get enough sleep, **then** we should stay healthy and shouldn't get sick so often.

However, it is possible to omit this word:

For example: **If** we get sick, we need to manage our recovery.

If we have a good diet, lead an active life and get enough sleep, we should stay healthy and shouldn't get sick so often.



It is a common language feature to use Conditionals when giving advice:

For example: If the pain persists, consult a doctor.

If you plan to travel to Equatorial Africa, take anti-Malaria tablets.

Ring me if you have any problems.

It is also possible to use **should** in these constructions:

For example: Should (if) you require further assistance, please do not hesitate to tell me.

The second part of the conditional structure – **consult a doctor; take anti-Malaria tablets; ring me** is actually an order. These orders are introduced by the Imperative Mood form of the verb – **consult, take and ring**.

Imperatives

Imperatives have a number of different functions in English. They are used to:

Function	Examples
Give orders	A teacher may say to a noisy class: Stop talking or Pay attention. Open your books at page 136. Find a partner and practise the dialogue. Now, check your answers.
Warn of an impending danger	Don't cross! Watch out! Beware of the dog! Mind the gap!
Give instructions	In IELTS writing task 2 it will say: Write at least 250 words. Now answer questions one to five.
Give advice	Consult a doctor if pain persists. Take enough money because Japan is quite expensive. Carry your mobile at all times.

Negative Form

The negative form of the Imperative Mood requires **don't – don't overeat, don't eat, don't speak with your mouth full!, don't stare!, don't shout!, don't do that!**

Examples: Make sure you have a balanced diet – **don't overeat and don't eat the wrong foods.**

Don't forget to take your medicine.

This structure is commonly used in English for giving advice. If we go away from home, for a holiday or to attend university, we might hear the following:

Don't forget to telephone!
Don't forget to write!

Don't worry about us – we will be all right!

The word **mind** (meaning **remember** or **don't forget**) is often used when giving advice using a verb in the Imperative Mood.

Examples: Mind you don't stay out too late.
It's cold outside. Mind you wear enough warm clothes.
Mind your manners!

On the London Underground (referred to locally in London as The Tube), passengers are warned constantly to **Mind the gap!** – ie the gap between the platform and the train carriage. Unwary travellers have fallen through these gaps in the past.

Giving Advice and English Proverbs

Proverbs are short, pithy sentences stating something commonly experienced, or for giving advice. Sometimes these proverbs require a little explanation as their meaning is not always transparent.

Some common English proverbs relating to things commonly experienced are:

Proverb	Explanation
Accidents will happen.	It is almost impossible to avoid some unfortunate events.
Absence makes the heart grow fonder.	Love grows stronger when separated from the one you love.
A rolling stone gathers no moss.	Keep active. You won't get rusty if you keep moving.
Many a slip between the cup and the lip.	Watch what you say to make sure you don't say something hurtful or wrong.
All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.	Working all the time makes you bored and boring. Relax a little!
A bad workman blames his tools.	You can't blame lack of skill on your tools.
A fool and his money are soon (easily) parted.	Be smart and careful with your money. Don't waste money.
If you play with fire, you will get burnt.	If you do something dangerous, you will get hurt. Be careful!
Like father, like son.	Children usually resemble their parents and follow their teachings and examples.
Love is blind.	Lovers don't usually see the faults in those they are in love with.

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There are other proverbs which we use for giving advice. These proverbs often use the Imperative form of the verb:

Proverb	Explanation
Practise what you preach!	Do what you tell others to do.
Don't put off till tomorrow what you can do today!	Don't delay. Make the most of the opportunity.
People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones!	Don't criticise others unless you are able to withstand criticism.
Don't put all your eggs in one basket!	Spread your risks.
When in Rome, do as the Romans do!	Follow the customs and values of those where you live.
Don't judge a book by its cover!	Don't judge by appearances.
An apple a day keeps the doctor away.	Eat healthily then you won't get sick.

A word of advice on the IELTS Tests:

General

1	Get a good night's sleep the night before the test.
2	Make sure you know where the test is and arrive in plenty of time.
3	Check and follow instructions carefully.
4	Develop your vocabulary for a variety of IELTS topic areas.
5	Become familiar with IELTS by doing plenty of practice tests.

Listening

1	Read the Listening test questions carefully in the time given.
2	Stay calm and concentrate on the listening passages as you hear them.
3	Listen out for synonyms and signpost words.
4	Transfer your answers carefully to the answer sheet.
5	Check your spelling, word limit and that your answer is grammatically correct.

Reading

1	Skim and scan the reading passage to locate the relevant areas.
2	Manage your time efficiently and effectively.
3	Allow 15 minutes for Part 1, 20 minutes for Part 2 and 25 minutes for Part 3.
4	Write your answers directly on the answer sheet as you complete each question.
5	Use the reading strategies you have learnt to answer the questions.

Writing

1	Get used to writing 150 words in 20 minutes and 250 words in 40 minutes.
2	Read the question topic and task carefully so that you answer all parts of the question.
3	Use a range of grammatical structures and sentence types.
4	Check your vocabulary, to make sure you have chosen the correct word forms.
5	Make sure you check your writing for spelling, grammar and punctuation mistakes.



Speaking

1	Develop your fluency by practising speaking every day.
2	Be mindful of hesitating or pausing too long when speaking. Try to maintain an even pace.
3	Choose a range of topics and brainstorm them to build up ideas for the test.
4	Develop good pronunciation by imitating the speech of native speakers.
5	Speak with a clear, strong voice and try to maintain eye contact.