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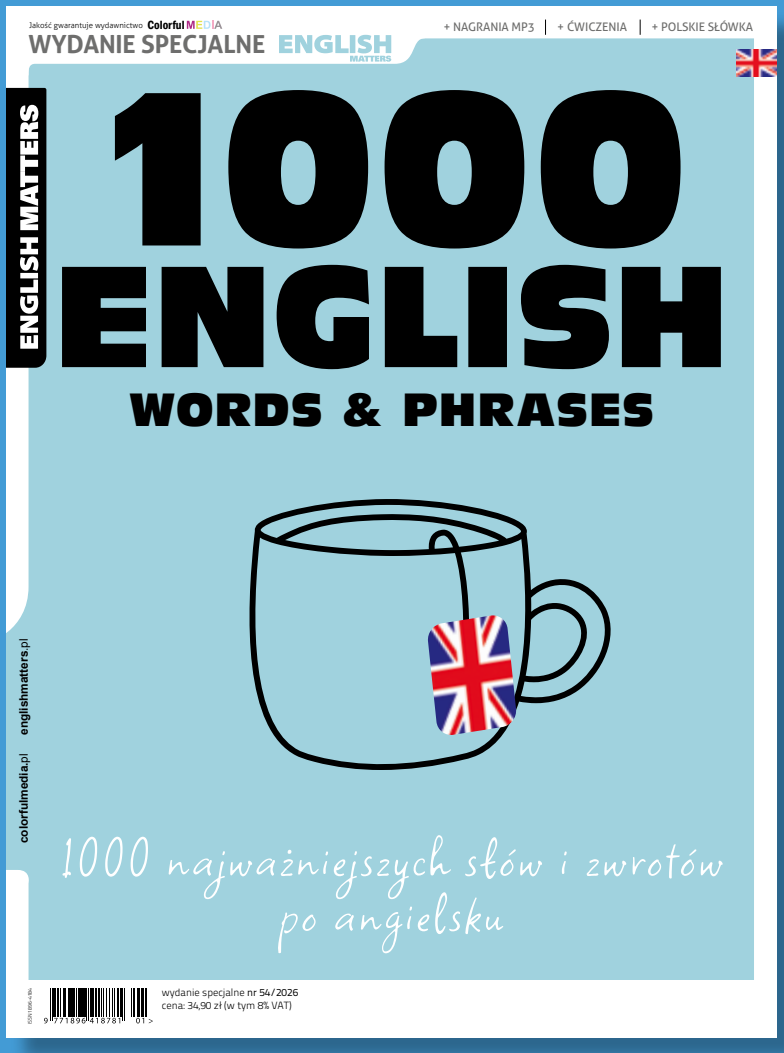
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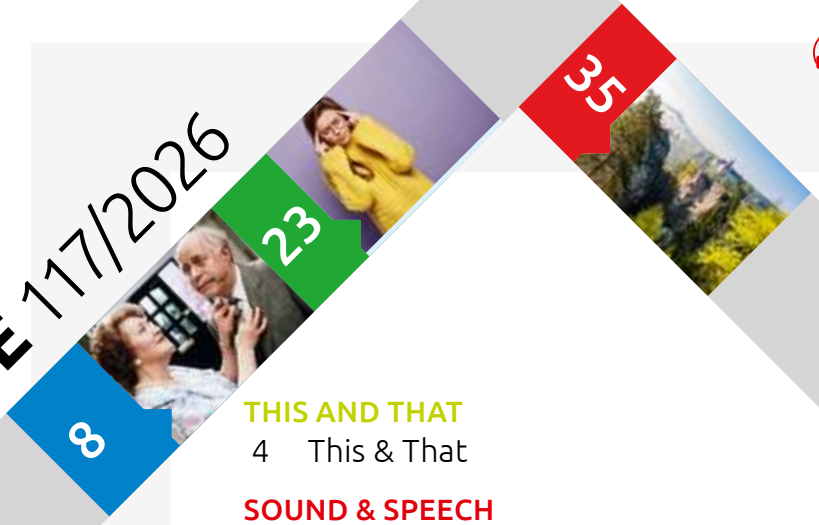
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PEOPLE AND LIFESTYLE

Dame Patricia Routledge, one of Britain's most beloved actresses who played Hyacinth Bucket, the funny, high-class-wannabe from the popular BBC comedy *Keeping Up Appearances*, passed away in October 2025 at the age of 96. *English Matters* presents her long-life and illustrious career.



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by Hanna Danielczak-Ziadi

NEO

Who is Neo? It is not the cartoon fish from a Disney movie, nor is it Keanu Reeves saving the world in The Matrix. Neo is a humanoid robot – described by some as cute and others as creepy – designed to perform various household chores previously done by humans. Neo is meant to clean, water plants, do the laundry, and even walk the dog – including picking up after your pet. Sales of Neo to US customers begin this year, while European customers will be able to purchase it in 2027. The cost of this luxury? $20,000, which is approximately 86,000 PLN. The hidden cost? Trading a portion of your privacy. To allow Neo to navigate your home, you must provide the manufacturer, 1X Technologies, with detailed floor plans, furniture layouts, and other specific needs (e.g., if you own a dog). You face a choice: gain a helper and become a product tester (note: 1X Technologies employees can take control of the robot via VR goggles if the robot is unable to react, meaning a stranger could see inside your home), or maintain your independence and privacy while observing the development of such products through the feedback of other users.

cartoon fish | ryba z kreskówki
humanoid | humanoidalny, człekokształtny
creepy | przerażający, niepokojący
to perform sth | wykonywać coś
household chores | obowiązki domowe
previously | wcześniej, uprzednio
to be meant to do sth | być przeznaczonym do zrobienia czegoś
to water sth | podlewać coś
to do the laundry | robić pranie
including sth | włączając coś, w tym coś
to pick up after one's pet | sprzątać po czyimś zwierzęciu
customer | klient
to purchase sth | kupić, nabyć coś
approximately | około, w przybliżeniu
Trading a portion of your privacy. | Oddawanie/poświęcanie części swojej prywatności.
to allow sb/sth to do sth | pozwalać komuś/czemuś coś zrobić
manufacturer | producent
to provide sb with sth | zapewniać komuś coś, dostarczać komuś czegoś
furniture layout | układ mebli
to face sth | stawiać czoła czemuś, mierzyć się z czymś
employee | pracownik
via sth | za pośrednictwem czegoś
unable to | niezdolny do
stranger | obcy, nieznajomy
independence | niezależność



GENETIC MONOGAMY AND COYOTES



While swans are famous for monogamy in the natural world, did you know that coyotes are equally devoted to their partners? These highly adaptable canines – found across North and Central America, from Alaska and Canada through the United States to Mexico and Panama – bond with their mates for life. They experience profound distress even during brief separations, and in the event of losing their partner, they go into deep mourning, expressed through long howling and changes in behaviour. A coyote that has lost its loved one will visit places associated with the lost partner. Mourning in coyotes is so intense that it causes neurochemical changes in the brain affecting memory and the perception of sensory input. Incredible? Indeed it is, especially in the context of the so often non-monogamous human species...

genetic monogamy | monogamia genetyczna
swan | łabędź
equally | równie, w równym stopniu
devoted to sb | oddany komuś
canine | psowaty
to bond with sb | nawiązać więź z kimś
mate | partner/partnerka
to experience sth | doświadczać czegoś
in the event of sth | w przypadku czegoś
to go into deep mourning | popaść w głęboką żałobę
howling | wycie
to cause sth | powodować coś
to affect sth | wpływać na coś
perception of sth | postrzeganie czegoś
sensory input | bodźce zmysłowe
indeed | w rzeczy samej
human species | gatunek ludzki

THE ORANGE BUBBLE

Have you heard of methods for dealing with people who have a negative impact on you? Since it is not always possible to avoid contact with such individuals (dubbed "toxic" both in professional literature and common parlance), various coping strategies are recommended.

One such method is imagining yourself inside a large bubble or sphere – orange on the outside and light pink on the inside. Visualising this bubble is intended to provide you with a sense of security and protection. According to various theories, the colour orange has protective properties (in Hinduism, for instance, it is a symbol of fire that burns away impurities, whereas in European culture, it is often considered an anti-depressant colour). Therefore, while inside our bubble, no "toxins" in any form can reach us. Pink, on the other hand, symbolises the ability for good energy to permeate, meaning that positive energy will flow from us to the outside world. Setting aside various beliefs associated with this method (attributed to ancient China or Celtic traditions) and describing the process in a simplified way, this method relies on how our brain works. When we visualise the sphere, new neural connections are formed, and we actually feel better because we are aware of the situation – forewarned and thus safer – knowing how to react to protect ourselves. This method is used by psychotherapists and psychotraumatologists to avoid being overwhelmed by the issues discussed during sessions.

to deal with sb | radzić sobie z kimś
impact on sb | wpływ na kogoś
to avoid sth | unikać czegoś
dubbed | nazywany
on the outside | na zewnątrz
on the inside | wewnętrz, w środku
sense of security and protection | poczucie bezpieczeństwa i ochrony
according to sth | według czegoś
to burn away sth | spalać coś
impurity | nieczystość
whereas | podczas gdy, natomiast
therefore | dlatego
on the other hand | z drugiej strony
to permeate sth | przenikać coś
to set sth aside | odkładać coś (na bok), pomijać coś
attributed to sth | przypisywany czemuś
to rely on sth | polegać na czymś
actually | właściwie, w rzeczywistości
to be aware of sth | być świadomym czegoś
forewarned | ostrzeżony
to be overwhelmed by sth | być przytłoczonym czymś

XENOBOTS

Can Artificial Intelligence create life? It turns out it can. By using elements of frogs – specifically skin and heart muscle cells from frogs in the blastula stage – and providing AI with the rules for creating the desired organism, synthetic organisms called Xenobots were born (named after the African frog Xenopus laevis). Xenobots are described as living robots, resembling the Pac-Man character from the popular 20th-century game in both appearance and movement. They are tiny; the first generation is about one millimetre in size. They can move, swim and carry payloads. They are capable of self-replicating, but they cannot eat; therefore, once the energy contained in their cells is exhausted, they die. The third generation of these robots was created without any human intervention. Xenobots were developed as part of a project funded by DARPA – an American government agency under the US Department of Defense.

to turn out | okazywać się
skin and heart muscle cells | komórki skóry i mięśnia sercowego
in the blastula stage | w stadium blastuli
to provide sb/sth with sth | dostarczać komuś/czemuś czegoś
named after X | nazwany na cześć X, nazwany od X
to resemble sb/sth | przypominać kogoś/coś
appearance | wygląd
to carry payloads | przenosić ładunki (np. substancje, dane)
capable of sth | zdolny do czegoś
self-replicating | samoreplikacja
contained in sth | zawarty w czymś
exhausted | wyczerpany

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by Kamil Drożdżyk

THE /M/ SOUND

The voiced bilabial nasal consonant isn't a rare one – according to PHOIBLE.com (the largest online database of phonological inventories) it occurs in 96% of all languages. You probably know it as the sound represented by the letter *m*, as this is its most common form in Latin-script alphabets. In phonetics, the sound is transcribed as /m/.

The phoneme is a voiced consonant, and we already know what that means – our vocal cords will vibrate while producing it. What about the other elements of its name? The word *bilabial* tells us that the upper and lower lips touch while making the sound, and the term *nasal* means that the air doesn't *come out through* the mouth but instead through the nose. Think of it like this: any sound you make requires the air to exit somewhere, but if your lips are closed, the only way out is through the nostrils.

The /m/ sound commonly appears at the beginning of words (most /məʊst/, mine /maɪn/), in the middle (lamp /læmp/, vampire /ˈvæmpaɪə/), and at the end (storm /stɔːm/, warm /wɔːm/). As mentioned before, it's usually represented by the letter *m* and, a bit less often, by a *double m* (recommend /ˌrɛkəˈmɛnd/, commander /kəˈmɑːndə/). Unlike in Polish, doubling the letter *m* (as well as most other letters) has no impact on pronunciation in English – the /m/ in summer /ˈsʌmə/ is pronounced exactly the same as the /m/ in camera /ˈkæmᵊrə/.

You've surely made this sound countless times before, so the next part should be easy. To make the /m/ sound, simply close your lips, keep your tongue relaxed, engage your vocal cords and let the air go out through your nose. If this last step feels a bit strange, don't worry – the airflow through your nose isn't very noticeable, but it's definitely there. Now, try to pronounce some English words involving the consonant.



voiced bilabial nasal consonant | spółgłoska nosowa dwuwargowa dźwięczna
according to X | według X
phonological inventory | inwentarz fonologiczny (zestaw dźwięków występujący w danym języku)
to occur | występować
Latin-script | zapisany alfabetem łacińskim
voiced | dźwięczny
consonant | spółgłoska
lips | wargi
instead | w zamian
to require sth | wymagać czegoś
nostrils | nozdrza
in the middle | w środku
unlike in X | inaczej niż w X
to double sth | podwoić coś
countless times before | niezliczoną ilość razy wcześniej
vocal cords | struny głosowe
noticeable | zauważalny, wyraźny
definitely | zdecydowanie, na pewno
involving sth | wiążący się z czymś, wymagający użycia czegoś

You will need two cups of milk /mɪlk/, one whole mango /ˈmæŋgəʊ/, two tomatoes /təˈmɑːtəʊz/, and 200 grams /græmz/ of ground pumpkin /ˈpʌmpkɪn/ seeds.

ground pumpkin seeds | *mielone pestki dyni*



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Mondays /ˈmʌndeɪz/ make /meɪk/ me /miː/ so miserable /ˈmɪzᵊrəbᵊl/!



calm	/kɑːm/ spokojny
dam	/dæm/ tama
jump	/dʒʌmp/ skakać
map	/mæp/ mapa
more	/mɔː/ więcej
my	/maɪ/ mój, moja, moje
zoom	/zuːm/ przybliżać



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It's Bouquet! Remembering Dame Patricia Routledge



by Paul Martin from
www.go-native.pl

Dame Patricia Routledge, one of Britain's most beloved actresses who played Hyacinth Bucket, the funny, high-class-wannabe from the popular BBC comedy Keeping Up Appearances, passed away in October 2025 at the age of 96. Paul Martin reflects on her long-life and illustrious career.

A True Star

The much-loved actor Patricia Routledge passed away recently at the age of 96. Her name is immediately connected with Hyacinth Bucket, the funny, high-class-wannabe from the popular BBC comedy Keeping Up Appearances, that achieved global syndication.

But there was much more to Dame Patricia's seven-decade career. She was famous both as a serious stage actress, winning major awards, and as a global TV icon. She took the skills of a theatre star and used them to make her eccentric TV characters real and memorable. Her hard work and strong focus on quality made her a true British treasure.

Hard Work, High Standards

Born in 1929 in Birkenhead, a town in the North West of England near the great port city of Liverpool, Dame Patricia's early life already showed the kind of discipline that would come to define her work.

She grew up in Tranmere, where her father earned a living selling clothes. Though the family were not poor, neither were they rich, and she often said she was thankful for her upbringing, which taught her and her brother to work hard and always "find out what we were best at and make the most of it."

Her early years were also strongly shaped by World War II (1939-1945). Because the nearby docks in Liverpool were so important to the British war effort, Birkenhead became a frequent target for heavy German bombing raids. Living through the air attacks and the daily struggles of wartime rationing gave her the deep sense of resilience and efficiency that typified so many of her generation.

0 beloved | ukochany, uwielbiany
high-class-wannabe | osoba aspirująca do wyższej sfery
Keeping Up Appearances | *tu:* polska wersja tytułu serialu „Co ludzie powiedzą", *dosł.* zachowywanie pozorów
to pass away | odejść, umrzeć
1 to achieve sth | osiągnąć coś
global syndication | globalna dystrybucja, sprzedaż praw do emisji programu wielu stacjom telewizyjnym na całym świecie
major | główny, ważny
award | nagroda
to take sth | *tu:* wykorzystać coś
the skills of a theatre star | umiejętności gwiazdy teatralnej
memorable | zapadający w pamięć
focus on sth | skupienie na czymś
treasure | skarb
that would come to define her work | co w przyszłości miało zdefiniować jej pracę (twórczość)
2 to grow up | dorastać
to earn a living | zarabiać na życie
though | chociaż
neither | *tu:* również nie
upbringing | wychowanie
to find out sth | dowiedzieć się czegoś
shaped by sth | ukształtowany przez coś
target for sth | cel czegoś (np. ataku)
bombing raid | nalot bombowy
struggle | walka, zmaganie się
wartime rationing | wojenne racjonowanie żywności
sense of resilience | hart ducha
efficiency | efektywność, skuteczność
to typify sth | być typowym przykładem czegoś

1 2

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Patricia Routledge



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The Routledge Standard?

Dame Patricia Routledge was famous for her crystal-clear voice and perfect pronunciation, skills she gained through her classical stage training. She often complained that people today speak English "as badly as possible." She believed strongly in keeping high standards for the language. She even once jokingly suggested starting a society to make sure people pronounced the letter 't' properly and stopped using the glottal stop (a sound made by stopping air in your throat instead of saying 't').

to gain sth | u/zyskać, zdobyć coś
to complain | narzekać, skarżyć się
jokingly | żartobliwie
to make sure | upewnić się
glottal stop | zwarcie krtaniowe (specyficzne zjawisko fonetyczne, polegające na nagłym zatrzymaniu przepływu powietrza w krtani, charakterystyczne dla wielu brytyjskich akcentów, np. cockney, gdzie zamiast wyraźnego „t" w słowie butter słychać przerwę)

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Patricia Routledge and Clive Swift as Hyacinth and Richard Bucket

After attending secondary school, she first studied English Literature at the University of Liverpool, which gave her a lifelong passion for language, words, drama and classic texts. It was there, in the University's drama club, that her tutor Edmund Colledge encouraged her to pursue acting professionally.

A Queen of the Theatre

Before she became a familiar face on television, Patricia Routledge was a huge star on the international theatrical stage. She was known as a brilliant singer and actress, especially in musicals.

Her talent was recognised in New York, where she won a Tony Award (the American equivalent of the Olivier Award) in 1968 for the musical Darling Of The Day. Later, she won an Olivier Award in London, in 1988 for her performance in the operetta Candide.

Routledge knew her strength lay in playing complex, unusual women. She once said: "I was never an ingénue, thank God; always character." This choice to play interesting, deep "character" parts instead of typical romantic leads is one of the reasons why she had such a long and enduring career.

Lady of the House

For millions of fans, and for Routledge herself, everything changed when she became Hyacinth Bucket in Keeping Up Appearances (1990–1995). Hyacinth was a suburban woman obsessed with being upper-class, always correcting her name to "Bouquet" and trying desperately to impress people.

The comedy followed Hyacinth's often hilarious attempts to invite local dignitaries to her house for "candlelight suppers," while constantly trying to hide her socially lower-class family: her sisters Daisy and Rose, her brother-in-law Onslow (who spent his time in a rusty old car), and her senile father. The contrast between Hyacinth's desperate efforts and her family's common ways created endless funny situations.

The show was a huge hit worldwide, largely because of Routledge's impeccable character acting. She didn't just *play* jokes; she played a real person with real, if misguided, hopes of bettering herself. Critics said she gave the character of Hyacinth, who could so easily have been unlikable, "such truth, precision and warmth."

She deployed her theatrical acting chops to make the timing of the comedy even better. She understood the difference between how Hyacinth saw herself and how she really was, which was ripe for comedic exploitation.

While Routledge was thankful for the fame Hyacinth brought, and never spoke disparagingly of the character, she always saw herself as a serious actor first and foremost. And she knew that the show allowed people to discover her stage work, too.

A Legacy Complete

In her mid-60s, by the time Keeping Up Appearances finished, her career did

3 to attend sth | uczęszczać gdzieś (np. do szkoły)
secondary school | szkoła średnia
lifelong | na całe życie
to encourage sb to do sth | zachęcać kogoś do zrobienia czegoś
to pursue sth | *tu:* realizować coś
acting | aktorstwo
familiar | znajomy
brilliant | *tu:* genialny, znakomity
recognised | uznany, rozpoznawalny
equivalent | odpowiednik
performance | występ, przedstawienie, wykonanie
strength | siła, mocna strona
ingénue | *fr.* amantka (w teatrze: rola młodej, niewinnej kobiety)
instead of sth | zamiast czegoś
lead | *tu:* główna rola
enduring | trwały, nieprzemijający, ponadczasowy
4 suburban | *tu:* mieszkający na przedmieściach
upper-class | wyższa klasa społeczna
to impress sb | zaimponować komuś
hilarious | przezabawny, komiczny
attempt | próba
candlelight supper | kolacja przy świecach
to hide sb | ukryć kogoś
lower-class | niższa klasa społeczna
brother-in-law | szwagier
Onslow | *wersja polska:* Powolniak
rusty | zardzewiały
senile | zdziecinniały na starość
impeccable | nienaganny, bez zarzutu
misguided | błędny, mylny
to better oneself | poprawiać swój status społeczny
unlikable | niesympatyczny, niedający się lubić
warmth | ciepło, serdeczność
to deploy sth | wdrożyć, zastosować coś
acting chops | warsztat aktorski, umiejętności aktorskie
ripe for sth | dojrzały do czegoś, gotowy na coś
disparagingly | lekceważąco, z pogardą
first and foremost | przede wszystkim, po pierwsze i najważniejsze
5 legacy | dziedzictwo, spuścizna

3 4 5

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not slow down. Routledge immediately took on a completely different main role in the crime drama Hetty Wainthropp Investigates (1996–1998), in which she played the titular Hetty, a sensible, down-to-earth pensioner who becomes a private investigator. This character was the opposite of Hyacinth: Hetty was proud of her working-class background and used her common sense to solve crimes.

Patricia Routledge continued to perform on stage and speak publicly well into her later years, and her total contribution to the arts was permanently recognised in 2017 when she was made a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) by the Queen, securing her permanent seat at the table of British acting legends.

Her body of work was a masterclass in intellectual discipline and commitment to character. And as one of the last remaining shining lights of British stage and screen to have been born in the 1920s, her passing also signals the demise of a generation that so artfully shaped the post-War British cultural landscape.

6 to slow down | zwolnić, ograniczyć aktywność (np. zawodową)
to take on sth | podjąć się czegoś (np. nowej roli, wyzwania)
sensible | rozsądny
down-to-earth | twardo stąpający po ziemi
pensioner | emeryt
working-class background | pochodzenie robotnicze
common sense | zdrowy rozsądek
to solve crimes | rozwiązywać zagadki kryminalne
contribution to sth | wkład w coś



recognised | uznany, doceniony
Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) | Dama Komandor Orderu Imperium Brytyjskiego
commitment to sth | oddanie czemuś, zaangażowanie w coś
passing | odejście, śmierć
demise | *tu:* koniec istnienia
artfully | po mistrzowsku
to shape sth | u/kształtować coś

Words of Wisdom

One month before her 95th birthday, Dame Patricia shared a powerful message with her fans, encouraging people to keep learning, exploring and living fully at every age. She reflected on how taking on Hyacinth at 50 "taught me to accept my own quirks: it healed something in me," and how returning to Shakespeare in her 70s, with "nothing to prove," allowed her to simply "be" in the role. Her advice on aging was replete with grace and optimism: that "growing older is not the closing act, it can be the most exquisite chapter, if you let yourself bloom again," and that, no matter your age, you only need to "show up, fully, for the life that is still ours.

wisdom | mądrość
to encourage sb to do sth | zachęcać kogoś do zrobienia czegoś
to reflect on sth | rozmyślać nad czymś, zastanawiać się nad czymś, poddawać coś refleksji
to take on sth | podjąć się czegoś
to heal sth in sb | uleczyć coś w kimś
nothing to prove | nie mieć nic do udowodnienia
to allow sb to do sth | pozwalać komuś na zrobienie czegoś
advice on sth | rada dotycząca czegoś
aging | starzenie się
replete with sth | pełen czegoś
grace | klasa, wdzięk
exquisite | znakomity, wyborny
to bloom | rozkwitać
no matter X | bez względu na X
to show up | pojawić się, stawić się (*również*: pokazać się z jakiejś strony)

POZNAJ NASZE PORADNIKI
BUSINESS ENGLISH MINI GUIDES



zobacz więcej:
kiosk.colorfulmedia.pl

Colorful MEDIA

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Interview with Anshar Studios

by Hanna Danielczak-Ziadi

Unless you are already a video game enthusiast and collector, you might have wondered what the phenomenon behind them is and whether it would be worth trying to immerse yourself in this world. If you are still considering it, this interview is for you – get to know one of the well-known video game developers – Anshar Studios, which specialises in narrative RPG games.


Painkiller

EM: Who came up with the idea to found Anshar Studios and why? Is Anshar Studios a Polish company?

Anshar Studios is a Polish company that was founded in 2012 by video game enthusiasts who wanted to turn their vision into games that players all over the world could enjoy.

The name Anshar Studios is inspired by Mesopotamian mythology, where Anshar was one of the primordial gods, symbolising the celestial sphere. We chose this name to emphasise our ambition to create rich, expansive worlds and boundless creativity.

EM: What exactly does Anshar Studios do? We ask this question for people unfamiliar with the games industry who, we hope, will get to know you through this interview.

For over a decade, Anshar has been creating video games and supporting other developers in realizing their projects. We have fully developed games such as Painkiller (2025), Layers of Fear (2023), and Gamedec, and we have also collaborated as a subcontractor on titles including Baldur's Gate 3, Divinity Original Sin II, Darksiders III, Outriders, Observer: System Redux, Gord, and Dead by Daylight, as well as other projects not yet publicly revealed.

We partner with the world's largest studios, offering them full support – from programming, design, graphics, animation, and sound design, to porting games to various platforms. In short, we handle everything that allows players worldwide to experience games at the highest level.

EM: Who makes up the Anshar Studios team? How can one join the team? What requirements need to be met?

The Anshar Studios team currently consists of approximately 200 people. We work on several projects simultaneously; each project involves anywhere from a few to several dozen people, depending on the phase of

1 to come up with sth | wymyślić coś, wpaść na coś
founded | założony
to turn sth into sth | zmienić coś w coś
primordial | pierwotny
celestial sphere | nieboskłon
to emphasise sth | podkreślić coś
expansive | *tu:* rozbudowany
boundless | bezgraniczny, nieograniczony
unfamiliar with sth | nieobeznany z czymś, nieznający czegoś
to support sb | wspierać kogoś
subcontractor | podwykonawca
2 publicly | publicznie
revealed | ujawniony, wyjawiony
to port sth to sth | przenieść coś na coś (np. oprogramowanie na inny system)
to handle sth | radzić sobie z czymś, obsługiwać coś
to allow sb to do sth | pozwalać komuś na zrobienie czegoś
to experience sth at the highest level | doświadczyć czegoś na najwyższym poziomie
to make up sth | tworzyć coś, składać się na coś
to join sth | dołączyć do czegoś
to meet the requirements | spełniać wymagania
currently | obecnie, aktualnie
consist of sb | składać się z kogoś
approximately | około, w przybliżeniu
to involve | angażować, wiązać się z czymś, obejmować
a few | kilka, paru
several dozen | kilkadziesiąt
depending on sth | zależnie od czegoś, w zależności od czegoś

1 2

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Anshar Studios team

WARTO ZAPAMIĘTAĆ!

celestial sphere
niebosklon

game development. Due to the planned expansion of our project scope, we are continually looking for specialists to join our team. Interested individuals can apply via our website, www.ansharstudios.com, where we publish current openings for various positions. We are looking for people with diverse profiles and experiences.

EM: What other companies in the games industry do you collaborate with to release new products?

We collaborate daily with both Polish and foreign studios. To date, we have worked on game development commissions for Polish companies such as Bloober Team (the best-known creator of horror video games), Fool's Theory, Flying Wild Hog, People Can Fly, The Farm51, and Artifex Mundi. Our foreign partners include the American company Saber Interactive, with whom we recently worked on Painkiller; the Belgian company Larian Studios, which we assisted with Baldur's Gate 3; and the American studios Tripwire and Wolfeye Studios. Due to the confidential nature of our work, we cannot yet publicly discuss all collaborations.

EM: Why – in your opinion – are people interested in horror? What makes the stories you create captivating and fascinating to players?

The fascination with horror stems from human curiosity and the need to explore the unknown. Horror allows players to safely explore their own fears and experience powerful emotions in a controlled environment. The feeling of anxiety, threat, and uncertainty in games deeply engages us, triggering adrenaline and providing intense experiences.

At Anshar, we place great emphasis on building atmosphere, psychological depth of characters, and non-linear narratives. We combine authentic emotions with refined gameplay mechanics to create a world that players truly immerse themselves in. We ensure that every decision matters and that the plot emotionally engages the player.

3 due to sth | z powodu czegoś, ze względu na coś
to apply | aplikować, składać podanie
via X | przez X, za pośrednictwem X
openings for various positions | wolne etaty na różne stanowiska, rekrutacje na różne stanowiska
to look for sb | szukać kogoś
to release sth | wydać coś, wypuścić coś na rynek (np. produkt, grę)
daily | codziennie, dziennie
to date | do tej pory
game development commission | zlecenie na produkcję gry
to include sth | zawierać, obejmować coś
confidential | poufny, tajny
4 captivating | *tu:* wciągający
to stem from sth | wynikać z czegoś, mieć w czymś źródło
the unknown | nieznane
the feeling of anxiety, threat, and uncertainty | uczucie niepokoju, zagrożenia i niepewności
to engage sb | angażować kogoś, zaciekawiać kogoś
to trigger sth | wywoływać, powodować, uruchamiać coś
to place great emphasis on sth | kłaść duży nacisk na coś
psychological depth of characters | głębia psychologiczna postaci
refined | dopracowany
to immerse oneself in sth | zanurzyć się, pogrążyć się w czymś
to matter | liczyć się, mieć znaczenie
plot | fabuła

3

4

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EM: What fuels creativity? How do you avoid repeating the same themes?

Our fuel for creativity is observing people and the world – we draw inspiration from everyday stories, emotions, as well as other art forms like film, literature or music.

Every game we work on differs from the previous one – in genre, theme and gameplay mechanics. To avoid repeating the same themes, we try to ask ourselves, ‚What new element can we bring to this genre or theme?' We analyse what has already been done, but we also look for fresh perspectives – whether in mechanics, narrative or the approach to the player itself. We experiment, test, and are not afraid to reject ideas that seem too derivative.


Painkiller

EM: Who is the main audience for the results of your work?

Although the RPG genre is closest to our hearts, we're currently working on games across various genres (RPG, shooter, horror, etc.). In this way, the games we work on reach players with very varied profiles. They're players from all over the world, although the largest markets are the United States, Western European countries and China.

EM: Do you particularly recommend any games, and if so, why those specifically?

Every player, whether experienced or beginner, has their own sensitivity and individual preferences, which is why we wouldn't point to one specific game as the one we recommend to everyone. Instead, we encourage everyone to seek out titles that match their own expectations, and in the case of horror, also their comfort boundaries.

EM: In what language versions are the games available?

Today, video games are usually released in many language versions to allow the widest possible audience a comfortable gameplay experience. The most common languages include English, German, French, Spanish, Italian and Chinese, but many titles also offer support for other, less popular languages.

The degree of localisation can vary depending on the game. Some titles have full localisation (meaning translated subtitles and voice-overs in a given language), while others only offer subtitles or interface translation. The decision to add a specific language version often depends on market size and player demand.

EM: Is there anything you would like to share with our readers?

We encourage all English Matters readers, regardless of age or previous experience, to open up to the world of video games, to experiment with different genres, and to discover how much value and fun contemporary games can offer.

5 to fuel sth | napędzać coś, podsycać coś
to avoid sth | unikać czegoś
to draw inspiration from sth | czerpać z czegoś inspirację
to differ from the previous one | różnić się od poprzedniego/poprzedniej
genre | gatunek (np. filmowy, literacki, muzyczny)
whether | czy
approach to sb | podejście do kogoś
to reject sth | odrzucić coś
to seem | wydawać się
derivative | wtórny, mało oryginalny
although | chociaż
varied | zróżnicowany
sensitivity | wrażliwość
to point to sth | wskazywać na coś
instead | zamiast tego, w zamian
to encourage sb to do sth | zachęcać kogoś do zrobienia czegoś
to seek out sth | wyszukiwać coś
boundaries | granice
available | dostępny
6 the degree of localisation | *tu:* zakres tłumaczenia
depending on sth | zależnie od czegoś, w zależności od czegoś
subtitles | napisy
voice-overs | dubbing, podkład głosowy
interface translation | tłumaczenie interfejsu
to depend on sth | zależeć od czegoś
market size | wielkość rynku
player demand | popyt ze strony graczy
regardless of sth | bez względu na coś, niezależnie od czegoś
previous | poprzedni, wcześniejszy
contemporary | współczesny



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Focus on Games

by Kamil Drożdżyk

According to the latest data, nearly half of the world's population (~3.5 billion people) regularly plays games, be it on consoles, smartphones, or computers. It's safe to say that gaming is quickly becoming one of the most accessible and popular leisure activities in the world. If you don't want to feel left out, you'd best level up your gaming-related language skills.

WARTO ZAPAMIĘTAĆ!

melee combat

walka wręcz

according to X | według X
nearly | prawie, niemal
leisure | rozrywka
gaming-related | związany z grami

Building a PC

Sam: I've been a console guy my whole life, but I've saved up some money and I'm thinking about building a PC. Compared to just getting a console, though, it seems so confusing. Where do I even start?
Tom: I can help you with that. I've been a PC gamer since the late nineties.
Sam: I'd appreciate it. So, what about all this hardware stuff... What do I need?
Tom: When it comes to hardware, you need the basics: a CPU, which is your computer's brain; a graphics card that renders images; memory, called RAM; a motherboard that allows all the components to communicate, and a hard drive to store files.
Sam: When you put it like that, it sounds rather simple.
Tom: Well, you can't forget about a power supply unit to keep the juice flowing to all the components. Then, you also need cooling fans to prevent the PC from overheating, a case to put everything in, and, naturally, a monitor, and a good mouse and keyboard. Oh, and speakers or a headset. Or both.
Sam: Gee, can you write it down for me?

compared to X | w porównaniu do X
though | chociaż
to seem | wydawać się
since the late nineties | od późnych lat dziewięćdziesiątych
to appreciate sth | doceniać coś
when it comes to X | jeśli chodzi o X
hardware | sprzęt (części fizyczne komputera)
CPU = Central Processing Unit | procesor
to render sth | renderować coś (generować obraz/grafikę)
motherboard | płyta główna
to allow | pozwalać, umożliwiać
to store sth | przechowywać coś
PSU = power supply unit | zasilacz
cooling fans | wentylatory chłodzące
to prevent sth from sth | zapobiegać czemuś
overheating | przegrzanie
speakers | głośniki
headset | słuchawki z mikrofonem
gee | ojej, rany (wykrzyknienie wyrażające zdziwienie lub zachwyt)
to write sth down | zapisać, zanotować coś

Technological Idioms

- **at the click of a button (*dosł.* za jednym kliknięciem)**
  – quickly and conveniently with use of technology

  With our app, you can order groceries at the click of a button.

- **to be a game-changer (być przełomem, punktem zwrotnym, czymś, co zmienia reguły gry)**
  – to be a new, more effective way of doing something

  These new headphones I bought are a game-changer – I can hear my enemies' footsteps perfectly.

- **to break the Internet (stać się niesamowitym wiralem, *dosł.* rozbić bank w Internecie, zepsuć Internet)**
  – to go incredibly viral and receive a lot of attention online

  Taylor Swift broke the Internet with her recent tweet.

to order sth | zamówić coś
groceries | artykuły spożywcze

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- **to double-click into sth (przyjrzeć się czemuś bliżej, zagłębić się w temat, *dosł.* dwa razy w coś kliknąć)**
– to explore a topic in more detail (often used in a corporate context)

We'll have to double-click into customer satisfaction scores to understand why they went down.

- **to pull the plug (zakończyć projekt/temat, *dosł.* wyciągnąć wtyczkę)**
– to cancel something, usually because it's no longer viable

The showrunner wanted to continue with the fifth season, but the production company pulled the plug.

- **plug and play (gotowy do użycia, *dosł.* podłącz i działaj)**
– ready to use immediately

The monitor is plug and play – no setup needed.

- **to recharge one's batteries (odpocząć, zregenerować się, *dosł.* naładować akumulatory/baterie)**
– to take time off to regain energy

I went on holiday to recharge my batteries.

customer satisfaction scores | wskaźniki satysfakcji klienta, wyniki badań dotyczące zadowolenia klienta
to go down | spaść, obniżyć się
showrunner | dyrektor kreatywny serialu
setup | konfiguracja, instalacja (proces ustawiania sprzętu lub oprogramowania)

Gaming Abbreviations

- **AFK (zaraz wracam, *dosł.* z dala od klawiatury)**
– away from keyboard

Hold on, my takeout just arrived. I'll be AFK for a few seconds.

- **BRB (zaraz wracam)**
– be right back

BRB, phone call.

- **DLC (zawartość do pobrania, dodatki do gry)**
– downloadable content (additional content released after the base game; e.g. skins, new maps, new story missions)

Josh played through the game twice – including all three story DLCs.

- **HUD (interfejs gracza)**
– heads-up display (player's health, ammo, money, compass, map, etc.)

This game's HUD is so cluttered I don't know what to look at.

- **NPC (postać niezależna, postać niebędąca graczem, sterowana przez komputer)**
– non-player character

The game has a wide variety of NPCs.

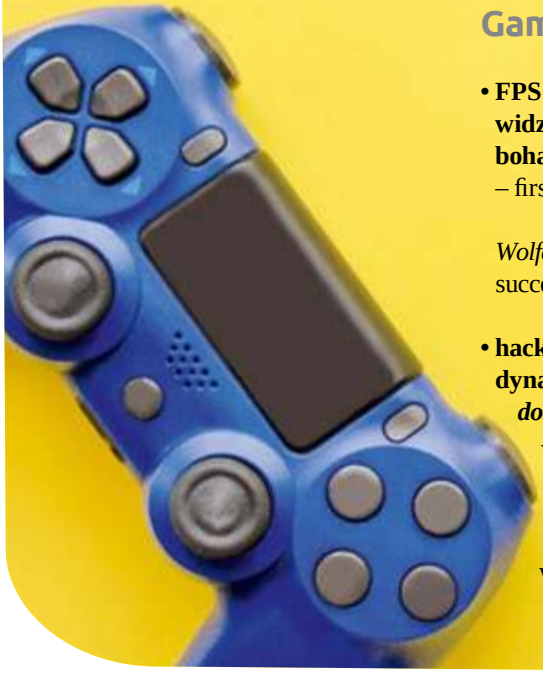
- **F2P (darmowa gra)**
– free to play

It's an F2P game, but it has a lot of microtransactions.

- **PC (komputer osobisty)**
– personal computer

Give me a second, my PC has just crashed.

takeout | jedzenie na wynos
released | wydany, wypuszczony na rynek
skins | skórki (elementy w grach zmieniające wygląd postaci lub broni)
including sth | włącznie z czymś
ammo | amunicja
cluttered | zagracony, przeładowany (np. o interfejsie HUD, na którym jest zbyt dużo ikon)
to look at sth | patrzeć na coś
variety of sth | różnorodność czegoś
to crash | *tu:* zawiesić się



Game Genres

- **FPS (strzelanka pierwszoosobowa, widziana z perspektywy głównego bohatera – gracza)**
– first person shooter

Wolfenstein 3D is one of the first successful FPS games.

- **hack-and-slash (gra skupiona na dynamicznej walce bronią białą, *dosł.* rąbanie i cięcie)**
– a game genre with emphasis on fast-paced melee combat

I find hack'n'slash games a good way to relax after a long day.

- **MMO (gra wieloosobowa dla bardzo dużej liczby graczy grających w tym samym czasie)**
– massively multiplayer online

Sarah doesn't enjoy playing MMOs – she says they're too grindy.

- **puzzle game (gra logiczna)**
– a game genre where the player solves puzzles

genre | gatunek
emphasis on sth | skupienie na czymś
melee combat | walka wręcz
grindy | wymagający mozolnego rozwijania postaci

Language

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Portal is a great puzzle-platform game, but it's really difficult. I got stuck on Test Chamber 11 for hours.

- **PvP (tryb rywalizacji z innymi graczami, *dosł.* gracz przeciwko graczowi)**
  – player versus player

  In PvP games, you're expected to fight other players.

- **RPG (gra fabularna polegająca na wcielaniu się w postać i jej rozwoju)**
  – role-playing game

The Witcher franchise is an extremely popular Polish RPG.

- **RTS (strategia w czasie rzeczywistym)**
  – real-time strategy

  RTS games can really test your critical thinking.

- **sim (symulator)**
  – simulator

  Simulator games are a rapidly expanding market. Did you know there's even a power washer sim?

- **shooter (strzelanka)**
  – a game genre focused on gunfights

  Max Payne is a classic shooter. I think I'll replay it again.

to get stuck | utknąć
extremely | wyjątkowo
expanding | rozwijający się
power washer sim | symulator myjki ciśnieniowej
focused on sth | skoncentrowany na czymś
gunfight | strzelanina, wymiana ognia

Describing Games

Martha: I like mobile games because they aren't too absorbing. A 5-minute session before bed satisfies my gaming needs.
Paul: So, you enjoy casual games. I'm the opposite – immersion, rich plot, and challenge are what I'm after.
Martha: You're right. I don't need to get lost in a game's universe or try to beat some impossible boss; a quick brain teaser is all I need. I love puzzle games for this reason.
Paul: I get it – I like them too. But sometimes I feel like flicking the lights off and booting up a survival horror game.
Martha: I couldn't do that. First of all, I'm easily scared, and second, I hate brutal games. The sight of blood makes me nauseous.
Paul: Not every horror game is brutal. Many of them are all about the tension and uncertainty rather than gore.
Martha: Either way, I'd rather stick to my puzzles.
Paul: Fair enough!

immersion | imersja, zanurzenie (stan, w którym całkowicie zapominasz o świecie rzeczywistym, bo gra cię tak wciągnęła)
plot | fabuła, główny wątek
to be after sth | szukać czegoś, chcieć coś (np. kupić), uganiać się za czymś
brain teaser | łamigłówka, zagadka logiczna
to flick the lights off | zgasić światło (szybkim ruchem przełącznika)
to boot up sth | uruchomić coś (np. komputer, grę)
survival horror game | gra z gatunku survival horror (gdzie gracz musi przetrwać w groźnym otoczeniu, mając mało zasobów)
first of all | po pierwsze, przede wszystkim
sight of blood | widok krwi
to make sb nauseous | przyprawiać kogoś o mdłości
uncertainty | niepewność
gore | rozlana krew
either way | tak czy inaczej
I'd rather stick to... | wolałbym/wolałabym trzymać się... (czegoś, co już znam lub wolę)
Fair enough! | W porządku! (używane, gdy uznajemy czyjeś racje)

Games To Test Your English

While playing a dialogue-rich RPG in English is a great way to learn new vocabulary, there are some games that specifically exist to test your knowledge of English. Here are some of them:
Wordle by The New York Times
Rules: You have six chances to guess a five-letter word. The colour of the tiles in which you put in letters changes to show how close your guess was to the word.

Connections by The New York Times
Rules: Group sixteen words into four groups of four. The words have to have something in common, for example be a specific part of speech, be used to describe the same thing, be used in the same collocation, etc.

Semantris by Google
Rules: Prevent a word list reaching the top by typing words associated with the highlighted word.

Redactle, originally created by John Turner
Rules: You see a random redacted Wikipedia article. Other than some common words (i.e. articles, the verb *to be*, prepositions etc.), everything is obscured. Your job is to unveil the article by typing in words you think may appear in the article. If your word is found in the article, it (along with all its variations) will be uncovered. The goal is to figure out what article you're reading with the least amount of uncovered words.

tile | płytka, kafel (np. w grach planszowych lub logicznych na ekranie)
to have sth in common | mieć coś wspólnego
to prevent sth | zapobiegać czemuś, uniemożliwiać coś
to type sth | wpisywać coś (na klawiaturze)
associated with sth | kojarzony z czymś, powiązany z czymś
highlighted | podświetlony
originally | pierwotnie
random | losowy, przypadkowy
obscured | zasłonięty, niewidoczny
to unveil sth | odsłonić, ujawnić coś
to appear | pojawić się
along with X | wraz z X, razem z X
uncovered | odkryty
to figure out sth | rozgryźć coś, znaleźć rozwiązanie



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Natural Antidotes to City Life

by Paul Martin from
www.go-native.pl

In an era defined by digital saturation and climate-controlled comfort, we have inadvertently domesticated ourselves out of our natural habitats. Yet, emerging science suggests that the path to mental clarity lies in a deliberate return to the sensory experiences of the wild. Paul Martin finds out where we can go to reclaim our biological balance.



o digital saturation | cyfrowe przesycenie, nadmiar bodźców cyfrowych
inadvertently | nieumyślnie, przypadkowo
to domesticate oneself out of sth | *tu:* odzwyczaić się od czegoś
habitat | środowisko naturalne
emerging | wyłaniający się, powstający
path to sth | droga, ścieżka do czegoś
mental clarity | jasność umysłu
deliberate | celowy, świadomy
sensory | zmysłowy, dotyczący zmysłów
to reclaim sth | odzyskać coś

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The Red Mind

It is a statistic that sounds almost dystopian. In the developed world, the average person now spends around 90 percent of their life indoors. We live in climate-controlled buildings, commute in sealed vehicles, often underground, and interact with the world through glowing glass screens.

By 2050, the United Nations projects that nearly 70 percent of the global population will live in cities. While urbanisation drives innovation and economic growth, it also creates a biological gap between how we live and how our nervous systems evolved to function.

Marine biologist Dr. Wallace J. Nichols has coined a name for the low-grade stress this creates: The Red Mind.

The Red Mind describes a state of chronic overstimulation. Cities demand our constant attention, filtering noise, traffic, information and social cues, while offering little genuine sensory variety. It's like we're running modern software on ancient evolutionary hardware, and the system is beginning to struggle.

Our bodies are still adapted for forests, coastlines and open land. When deprived of these environments, the result is cognitive fatigue, elevated cortisol levels, and a lingering sense of disconnection, sometimes referred to as *Nature Deficit Disorder.*

1 dystopian | dystopijny
average | przeciętny
indoors | w pomieszczeniu, w domu, *dosł.* wewnątrz
to commute | dojeżdżać (do pracy, szkoły)
sealed | szczelnie zamknięty
to interact with sth | wchodzić w interakcję z czymś
glowing | świecący
to project that | przewidywać, że/ prognozować, że

If this is the problem, then coping strategies alone are not enough. What we need is rebalancing, and that requires antidotes. Not one universal cure, but several complementary ones: Green, Blue and Dark.

The Chemical Antidote: Green Space

If nature were a pharmacy, forests would provide the chemical medicine. In Japan, this approach is known as *Shinrin-yoku*, or "forest bathing." Developed in the 1980s in response to rising workplace burnout, it encourages people to slow

nearly | prawie, niemal
urbanisation | urbanizacja
to drive sth | *tu:* napędzać coś
growth | wzrost
gap | luka
to evolve | ewoluować, rozwijać się
to coin sth | ukuć coś
low-grade stress | przewlekły stres o niskim natężeniu
to demand sth | wymagać, domagać się czegoś
constant attention | stała uwaga, nieustanna koncentracja
filtering noise | filtrowanie hałasu
traffic | ruch uliczny
social cues | sygnały, wskazówki społeczne
genuine | autentyczny, prawdziwy
sensory variety | różnorodność bodźców zmysłowych
to run sth | *tu:* obsługiwać coś
ancient | starożytny, pradawny
to struggle | zmagać się
coastline | linia brzegowa, wybrzeże
deprived of sth | pozbawiony czegoś
cognitive fatigue | zmęczenie poznawcze
elevated | podwyższony, zwiększony
lingering | utrzymujący się
sense of disconnection | poczucie odłączenia
Nature Deficit Disorder | zespół deficytu natury
2 coping strategies | strategie radzenia sobie z czymś
to require sth | wymagać czegoś
cure | lekarstwo
complementary | uzupełniający
to provide sth | dostarczać czegoś
approach | podejście
forest bathing | kąpiel leśna
workplace burnout | wypalenie zawodowe
to encourage sb to do sth | zachęcać kogoś do zrobienia czegoś

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down, move gently and absorb the forest through all five senses.

Unlike hiking or exercise, the goal is not achievement, it is physiological reset.

The science behind forest bathing is surprisingly precise. Trees, especially mature ones, emit antimicrobial compounds called *phytoncides*, which protect them from insects and disease. When humans inhale these compounds, the body responds by increasing the activity of Natural Killer (NK) cells, a key component of the immune system responsible for fighting infection and tumours.

In a landmark study from Nippon Medical School in Tokyo, participants who spent three days in a forest experienced a roughly 50 percent increase in NK cell activity. Crucially, this boost did not disappear after returning to city life; it persisted for up to 30 days. In effect, regular exposure to forests can function like a monthly immune "top-up".

Forests also work on us visually. Physicist Richard Taylor has shown that natural environments are rich in *fractals*, self-repeating patterns found in trees, leaves and coastlines. The human visual system is especially efficient at processing these patterns, and viewing them has been shown to reduce physiological stress by up to 60 percent.

In Poland, the Białowieża Forest offers a rare concentration of these effects. One of the last surviving fragments of Europe's primeval woodland, it feels immediately different. The air is heavier and cleaner, scented with decay, the sign of a living ecosystem. Among ancient oaks, European bison still roam, and many visitors report a near-instant quieting of the mind.

The Meditative Antidote: Blue Space

If forests restore us chemically, water does so visually and physically. This is the realm of the Blue Mind, a term popularised by Nichols to describe the calm, mildly meditative state people experience when near, in, or on water.

This state directly counters the Red Mind of constant "directed attention." In contrast, nature induces what psychologists Stephen and Rachel Kaplan call soft fascination, where the waves, reflections and movement hold our attention without any effort on our behalf. We can focus *without* focusing, which allows our mental resources precious time to recover, a process known as Attention Restoration Theory.

The body responds quickly to this state, and proximity to water is associated with increased dopamine and serotonin, alongside reductions in heart rate and blood pressure.

For a sustained Blue Mind experience, the Great Masurian Lakes provide an ideal setting. Sailing, in particular, enforces a flow state, often called 'being in the zone.' This is when the challenge of the activity matches your skill so perfectly that you lose track of time and self.

The Cold Water Shock

For those seeking a more intense reset, wild swimming offers a sharper intervention. The rapid growth of open-water swimming across Europe reflects more than a lifestyle trend; it reflects mounting evidence of actual psychological benefit.

A recent large-scale study by the BlueHealth project, analysing over 1,200 swimming visits across 19 countries, distinguished the benefits of wild swimming from pool swimming. While both

3 unlike X | w przeciwieństwie do X
hiking | wędrówki piesze
achievement | osiągnięcie
mature ones | dojrzałe (np. osobniki, formy)
antimicrobial | przeciwdrobnoustrojowy
compound | związek (chemiczny)
disease | choroba
to inhale sth | wdychać coś
to increase sth | zwiększać coś
Natural Killer (NK) cells | komórki NK (naturalni zabójcy)
immune system | układ odpornościowy
tumour | nowotwór, guz
landmark study | przełomowe badanie
participant | uczestnik
to experience sth | doświadczać czegoś
roughly | w przybliżeniu, mniej więcej
increase | wzrost
crucially | co najważniejsze
boost | wzmocnienie
to disappear | zniknąć
to persist | utrzymywać się, trwać
exposure to sth | kontakt z czymś
immune | odpornościowy
to work on sb visually | oddziaływać na kogoś wizualnie
fractal | fraktal
self-repeating pattern | samopowtarzalny wzór
efficient at sth | skuteczny w czymś, wydajny w czymś
to process sth | przetwarzać coś
to view sth | oglądać coś
primeval woodland | pierwotny las, puszcza
scented with sth | pachnący czymś
decay | rozkład, gnicie
oak | dąb
European bison | żubr europejski
to roam | wędrować, swobodnie się przemieszczać
near-instant | niemal natychmiastowy
quieting of the mind | wyciszenie umysłu
to restore sb | przywracać kogoś do równowagi, regenerować kogoś
realm | królestwo, strefa
to counter sth | przeciwdziałać czemuś
directed attention | ukierunkowana uwaga
to induce sth | wywoływać, powodować coś
4 without any effort | bez żadnego wysiłku
on our behalf | *tu:* z naszej strony
without sth | bez czegoś
to allow | pozwalać, umożliwiać
to recover | odzyskiwać siły, dochodzić do siebie
Attention Restoration Theory | teoria odtwarzania (regeneracji) uwagi
proximity to sth | bliskość czegoś
increased | zwiększony, podwyższony
alongside sth | wraz z czymś
reductions in heart rate and blood pressure | obniżenie tętna i ciśnienia krwi
sustained | utrzymujący się
setting | sceneria
sailing | żeglarstwo, żeglowanie
to enforce sth | narzucać coś, wprowadzać coś w życie
flow state | stan przepływu
to match sth | *tu:* odpowiadać czemuś
to lose track of time and self | zatracić poczucie czasu i siebie
to seek sth | poszukiwać czegoś, dążyć do czegoś
open-water swimming | pływanie w naturalnych zbiornikach wodnych
to reflect sth | odzwierciedlać, pokazywać coś
mounting | narastający, rosnący
evidence | dowód, świadectwo
actual | rzeczywisty, faktyczny
to distinguish sth | rozróżniać coś
pool swimming | pływanie w basenie

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reduced stress, those swimming in natural bodies of water reported significantly higher well-being, which researchers linked to feelings of autonomy and competence after successfully navigating an environment that is not fully controlled.

Biologically, the effect is dramatic. Cold water stimulates the vagus nerve, activating the parasympathetic nervous system. The initial shock disrupts the brain's default mode, the circuitry associated with worry, and forces attention into the present moment. At the same time, powerful neurochemicals are released that produce heightened alertness followed by deep calm.

However, you must be careful. The cold shock that resets your brain can also make you gasp for air and lose control. Safety is the most important thing. Experts strongly advise that you never swim alone. Always go with an organised group or club. Swimming with a guide or a group ensures someone is watching you. If the cold becomes too much, they can help you immediately, making the experience safe and enjoyable.

The Perspective Antidote: Dark Skies

There is one final element of nature we are rapidly losing: darkness. Around 80 % of the world's population now lives under light-polluted skies.

5 to report sth | donosić o czymś, zgłaszać coś, informować o czymś
significantly | znacząco, istotnie
to link sth to sth | łączyć, wiązać coś z czymś
vagus nerve | nerw błędny
parasympathetic nervous system | przywspółczulny układ nerwowy
to disrupt sth | zakłócać, przerywać coś
brain's default mode | tryb domyślny mózgu (odnosi się do stanu, w którym mózg nie jest zaangażowany w konkretne zadanie i „pracuje w tle", np. w myśleniu o sobie, przeszłości lub przyszłości)

5

6

The Science: Why Your Eyes Love Fractals

Why does a concrete wall stress us out, while a tree calms us down? The answer lies in Fractals.

- **What are they?** Complex patterns that repeat at different scales. A tree branch looks like a mini version of the whole tree; a vein in a leaf looks like the branch.
- **Processing Fluency:** Our visual systems evolved over millions of years specifically to process these natural, high-fractal patterns.
- **The Effect:** When the eye sees a fractal (in clouds, coastlines, or forests), the brain processes the image with minimal effort. This state is called "processing fluency." It physically relaxes the eye muscles and lowers the stress response in the brain by up to 60%. Modern architecture often lacks these patterns, forcing the brain *to* work harder to interpret the scene.

concrete wall | betonowa ściana, betonowy mur
branch | *tu:* gałąź
to look like sth | wyglądać jak coś
whole | cały
vein | *tu:* żyła, nerw
high-fractal | wysoko-fraktalny, o wysokim stopniu samopowtarzalności wzoru
"processing fluency" | płynność przetwarzania (łatwość, z jaką mózg przetwarza informacje)
physically | fizycznie
to lack sth | nie mieć czegoś
to force sth to do sth | zmusić coś do zrobienia czegoś
circuitry | zespół obwodów
to force attention into sth | zmuszać uwagę do skupienia na czymś
to be released | *tu:* być wydzielanym
heightened | zwiększony
alertness | czujność, stan gotowości
to gasp for air | łapać powietrze
safety | bezpieczeństwo
to advise | doradzać, zalecać
to ensure sth | zapewniać, gwarantować coś
6 enjoyable | przyjemny
darkness | ciemność
light-polluted | zanieczyszczony światłem

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If forests heal the body and water heals the mind, the night sky restores perspective. Psychologists describe awe as the emotion we feel when encountering something vast and beyond our understanding, an experience increasingly rare in everyday life.

Research by psychologist Dacher Keltner shows that awe produces a "small self" effect, where you realise, healthily, that our anxieties exist within a far larger universe. People who experience awe tend to act more generously, feel more connected to others, and worry less about personal concerns.

In cities, only a handful of stars may be visible. In a certified Dark Sky Park, that number rises into the thousands. After allowing the eyes to adjust, phones switched off, the Milky Way becomes visible as a pale river across the sky.

Step Outside

Not everyone can retreat to forests, lakes or dark-sky reserves on a regular basis. This is where the idea of a great return to nature becomes practical in everyday life.

Movements such as guerrilla gardening, championed by figures like Ron Finley, reclaim neglected urban soil for food and community. Even small changes to your routine matter. Walking through a park, tending plants, or choosing a greener route through the city can provide meaningful sensory relief.

Healthcare systems are also beginning to recognise this. Green prescriptions, where doctors prescribe time in nature rather than medication, are moving from fringe to mainstream. Research by Dr. MaryCarol Hunter suggests that as little as 20 minutes in a green space can lower cortisol levels significantly.

So, the next time that you feel divorced from nature, remember: the antidotes are ready. All that remains is to step outside.

7 to heal sth | leczyć coś
awe | zachwyt, podziw
to encounter sth | napotkać coś, zetknąć się z czymś
vast | ogromny, rozległy
beyond our understanding | poza naszym pojmowaniem, nie do ogarnięcia
increasingly | *tu:* coraz częściej
„small self" effect | efekt „małego ja" (poczucie własnej niewielkiej roli wobec czegoś większego)
to realise sth | uświadomić sobie coś, zdać sobie sprawę z czegoś
anxieties | niepokoje, lęki
personal concerns | osobiste troski, problemy
handful of sth | garść czegoś, niewielka ilość czegoś
visible | widoczny
to adjust | dostosować, przystosować (się)
switched off | wyłączony
pale | blady, jasny
to step outside | wyjść na zewnątrz
to retreat to sth | wycofać się do czegoś, udać się do czegoś (np. spokojnego miejsca)
on a regular basis | regularnie, systematycznie
guerrilla gardening | partyzanckie ogrodnictwo (uprawa roślin w zaniedbanych miejscach bez formalnej zgody)
championed by sb | popierany, wspierany przez kogoś
neglected | zaniedbany
urban soil | gleba miejska
community | społeczność
to matter | mieć znaczenie
to tend sth | pielęgnować coś, opiekować się czymś
meaningful | znaczący
sensory relief | ulga dla zmysłów
to recognise sth | rozpoznać coś, dostrzec coś, uznać coś
green prescription | „zielona recepta", zalecenie spędzania czasu w naturze dla zdrowia
to move from fringe to mainstream | przejść z marginesu do głównego nurtu, stać się powszechnie akceptowanym
to lower sth | obniżać coś
to feel divorced from sth | czuć się odłączonym, oderwanym od czegoś

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Migraine: More Than Just a Headache

by Paul Martin from
www.go-native.pl

Migraine. For many, it's just another word for a bad headache; a bit of drama, a common sick-day excuse. But that's not the whole story. Paul Martin explores how common perceptions of migraine fall short.

Pulling a Sickie?

"I've got a migraine" has become a throwaway line, shorthand for a bad headache, or a way to avoid work. But for those who live with the condition, this can feel like a slap in the face. Migraine is not just a bad headache, it's a disabling neurological condition that can leave someone unable to speak, walk or function properly for hours or even days. This gap between perception and reality means many sufferers don't get the support they need from colleagues, schools or even doctors.

Migraine is also far more common than many realise. An estimated 1.1 bln people worldwide are affected each year. It's the second leading cause of disability globally and the top neurological condition in the UK, affecting one in seven adults. Most sufferers are working-age, and women are affected about three times more often than men, largely due to hormonal factors.

Before the Bang

Migraine often occurs in a sequence of four stages, often beginning quietly. In the prodrome phase, which can start hours or even days before the main event, the brain begins to subtly change. People may feel unusually fatigued or moody, yawn excessively, crave certain foods, or develop a stiff neck. Some have trouble concentrating or feel irritable for no clear reason. These early symptoms are easy to dismiss, but for those who know what to look for, they're often the first sign that a migraine is on the way.

At this point, there's no pain – just the sense that something is brewing. If spotted early enough, the prodrome can offer a critical window: a chance to rest, take medication, or modify the day to reduce the severity of what comes next. But often, it slips by unnoticed.

0 headache | ból głowy
common | powszechny
sick-day excuse | wymówka, żeby uzyskać zwolnienie lekarskie
perception of sth | postrzeganie czegoś
to fall short | zawodzić, nie wystarczać, nie spełniać oczekiwań
Pulling a sickie? | *pot.* Symulujesz?
1 throwaway line | rzucona mimochodem uwaga, uwaga bez większego znaczenia
shorthand for sth | skrót myślowy dla czegoś, potoczne określenie na coś
to avoid sth | unikać czegoś
slap in the face | (uderzenie w) policzek, zniewaga
disabling | uniemożliwiający normalne funkcjonowanie
unable to do sth | niezdolny do zrobienia czegoś
gap | luka, przepaść
to realise sth | zdać sobie z czegoś sprawę, uświadomić sobie coś
estimated | szacowany
to be affected | być dotkniętym (np. chorobą)
disability | niepełnosprawność
working-age | w wieku produkcyjnym
due to sth | z powodu czegoś
hormonal factors | czynniki hormonalne
2 bang | *tu: przen.* uderzenie (często o nagłym bólu głowy)
to occur | wystąpić
prodrome phase | faza zwiastunowa (okres przed właściwym atakiem choroby, np. migreny)
moody | kapryśny, mający zmienne nastroje
to yawn | ziewać
excessively | nadmiernie
to crave sth | mieć na coś wielką ochotę
to develop a stiff neck | dostać sztywności karku
to dismiss sth | zlekceważyć coś
to look for sth | szukać czegoś
to be on the way | być w drodze, nadchodzić
to brew | *tu:* nadciągać
severity | dotkliwość (np. bólu)
to slip by unnoticed | przemknąć, przejść niezauważonym

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Lights Out

For around one in three migraine sufferers, the next stage is aura, a strange and unsettling phase that doesn't happen to everyone. Some people even experience aura without ever developing a headache – a phenomenon known as silent migraine.

When aura does occur, its symptoms usually build gradually and in sequence over five to sixty minutes before fading, and in that time, the brain can produce some startling effects. The most common symptoms are visual: flashing lights, shimmering lines, zigzags, or blind spots in the field of vision. Shapes may pulse or distort.

But aura also affects other senses and functions. Some people feel tingling or numbness down one side of the body, struggle to speak, hear ringing in the ears, or experience dizziness and confusion. These symptoms can closely resemble those found in stroke and are frightening to experience.

Yet, in contrast to stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA), which tends to strike suddenly and all at once, migraine aura typically progresses slowly, moving from one area of the body to another in a recognisable pattern. That distinction is important. But for anyone experiencing symptoms like this for the first time, there's no way to be sure in the moment, and seeking medical advice is essential.

Cortical Spreading Depression

Unlike stroke, aura does not do lasting damage to the brain; what makes it so disturbing is how consciously it unfolds. You might be reading a book when the words begin to vanish right in front of you. A few minutes later, your fingers tingle. Then your face. Then your tongue. Speaking becomes difficult.

This occurs due to a phenomenon called cortical spreading depression (CSD), a wave of electrical disruption that moves slowly across the brain's surface, temporarily silencing activity in the regions it passes through. It's like a progressive power cut. If the wave crosses the visual cortex, that's when vision flickers or fades. If it reaches the language centre, words slip away. If it hits the sensory areas, the skin tingles or goes numb. This step-by-step shutdown is what gives aura its signature rolling pattern. You're fully aware of it, but unable to stop it.

The Pain

After aura fades, or in cases where there is no aura at all, the attack phase begins. This is what most people think of when they hear the word migraine.

The pain is typically intense and throbbing, usually focused on one side of the head but sometimes spreading more widely. It may last for a few hours or as long as three days. Even mild physical activity, like walking up stairs or turning your head, can make the pain worse. But pain is only one part of the picture.

Many people also experience nausea, vomiting, and extreme sensitivity to light, sound and smell. Some become pale and clammy, others feel lightheaded or dizzy. Bright light feels unbearable. Normal conversation sounds too loud and the smell of someone's coffee can be enough to make you sick. During this painful phase, a dark, quiet environment is often the only tolerable space. Many sufferers are confined to bed, unable to function normally or respond to conversation.

3 lights out | gasną światła (tu jako metafora)
aura | aura, zespół objawów poprzedzających napad migreny
unsettling | niepokojący, budzący niepokój
phenomenon | zjawisko
gradually | stopniowo
fading | zanikanie, blednięcie
startling | *tu:* zatrważający
visual | wizualny, wzrokowy
flashing lights | błyskające światła
shimmering lines | migoczące linie
zigzags | zygzaki
blind spots | mroczki, ubytki w polu widzenia
to distort | zniekształcać
senses | zmysły
to feel tingling or numbness down one side of the body | czuć mrowienie lub drętwienie po jednej stronie ciała
to struggle to do sth | mieć trudność ze zrobieniem czegoś, zmagać się z czymś
dizziness | zawroty głowy
to resemble sth | przypominać coś, być podobnym do czegoś
stroke | udar mózgu
frightening | przerażający
transient ischaemic attack (TIA) | przemijający atak niedokrwienny (tzw. „mikroudar")
to strike | *tu:* uderzyć, wystąpić
in a recognisable pattern | w rozpoznawalny sposób, według znanego wzoru
distinction | rozróżnienie
to seek medical advice | szukać porady medycznej, zasięgnąć opinii lekarza
cortical spreading depression | szerząca się depresja korowa (zjawisko neurologiczne w korze mózgowej)
unlike X | inaczej niż X
lasting | trwały, długotrwały
damage to sth | uszkodzenie czegoś
disturbing | niepokojący
consciously | świadomie
to unfold | rozwijać się, rozgrywać się
to vanish | znikać
to tingle | mrowić
wave of sth | fala czegoś
electrical disruption | zakłócenie elektryczne
temporarily | tymczasowo
to silence sth | wyciszyć coś
to pass through sth | przechodzić przez coś
power cut | *dosł.* przerwa w dostawie prądu
visual cortex | kora wzrokowa
to flicker | migotać
4 to slip away | wymykać się, powoli znikać
sensory area | obszar czuciowy
to go numb | drętwieć, tracić czucie
step-by-step | krok po kroku
shutdown | *tu:* wyłączanie czegoś
signature rolling pattern | charakterystyczny schemat/wzór
to be fully aware of sth | być czegoś w pełni świadomym
at all | w ogóle
throbbing | pulsujący
focused on sth | skupiony na czymś
spreading | rozprzestrzeniający się
to walk up the stairs | wchodzić po schodach
nausea | nudności
vomiting | wymioty
sensitivity to light, sound, and smell | wrażliwość na światło, dźwięk i zapach
pale | blady
clammy | *tu:* oblany zimnym potem
to feel lightheaded or dizzy | czuć mroczki przed oczami lub mieć zawroty głowy
to feel unbearable | wydawać się nie do zniesienia
to make sb sick | powodować, że ktoś wymiotuje; sprawiać, że ktoś czuje się chory
to be confined to bed | być przykutym do łóżka

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After the Blur

Finally, when the worst of the pain subsides, the postdrome begins – the final stage in the migraine cycle, often referred to as the "migraine hangover".

Although the attack has passed, the brain and body are still in recovery. People often feel drained and foggy. Many report difficulty concentrating, exhaustion, sore muscles, and mood changes. You may feel low, anxious, or, again, oddly euphoric. Even simple tasks can feel demanding as you and your brain recover from a neurological crash.

This phase can last 24 to 48 hours, and while it's often overshadowed by what had preceded it, it can be just as disruptive. A person may seem "better", but inside they're still working through the aftershocks. Overall, a single migraine episode can span several days, but to make matters worse for those who are particularly vulnerable, just as things return to normal, the next one may already be building.

Triggers, Not Causes

When people ask what causes migraine, the answer isn't simple. Despite decades of research, the exact cause remains unclear. What we do know is that it involves a mix of genetic vulnerability and abnormal brain responses. People with migraine tend to have highly sensitive nervous systems that overreact to changes in their body or environment.

Brain chemicals like serotonin and CGRP (calcitonin gene-related peptide) are thought to play key roles, alongside irregular activity in the brainstem, which helps regulate pain and sensory input. In short, the migraine brain is wired to respond more dramatically to even small disruptions.

Genetics also matter. If a parent has migraines, their child is more likely to have them, too – but this doesn't mean migraines are inevitable. That's where triggers come in.

A trigger isn't a cause, but something that can tip a sensitive brain into an attack. Triggers vary widely. One person might react to bright light or air pressure changes, while others report being affected by missed meals, poor sleep, stress, hormones, dehydration, or certain foods like red wine or cheese.

Some "triggers" may even actually be early symptoms. Craving chocolate, for instance, might reflect the brain already shifting into migraine mode. This makes triggers hard to identify and impossible to avoid entirely.

It is all in Your Head

Too often, migraines are dismissed as imaginary or dramatic. But the science is clear: migraine is a real, complex, and debilitating brain disorder. It has roots in brain chemistry, electrical signalling, genetics and environmental sensitivity. It is, quite literally, in your head – and that's exactly why it should be taken seriously.

A deeper understanding of migraine can help shift public attitudes and create more realistic expectations in workplaces, schools and relationships, and there are now many advocacy organisations trying to deliver this message.

So next time someone says they're having a migraine, don't roll your eyes or tell them to take a pill. What they're dealing with might be invisible, but very real, complex, and far more than "just a headache."

5 blur | niewyraźny obraz, zamazanie
to subside | ustępować
postdrome | postdrom (ostatnia faza migreny)
migraine hangover | kac migrenowy
although | chociaż
to pass | mijać, przechodzić
to be in recovery | być w trakcie rekonwalescencji, powracać do zdrowia
drained | pozbawiony sił, *dosł.* wyciśnięty
foggy | zamglony
exhaustion | wyczerpanie
sore | obolały
anxious | zaniepokojony
oddly | dziwnie, osobliwie
to feel demanding | wydawać się wymagającym
overshadowed by sth | przyćmiony przez coś
to precede sth | poprzedzać coś
disruptive | zakłócający spokój, destrukcyjny
to seem | wydawać się
to work through the aftershocks | radzić sobie ze skutkami ubocznymi po ataku
to span | obejmować
vulnerable | podatny na coś
trigger | czynnik wyzwalający, bodziec
despite sth | pomimo czegoś
to involve sth | wiązać się z czymś
vulnerability | wrażliwość, podatność na coś
calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) | peptyd związany z genem kalcytoniny (kluczowe białko w procesie powstawania bólu migrenowego)
sensory input | bodźce zmysłowe
to be wired to do sth | mieć wrodzoną tendencję do czegoś
to matter | liczyć się, mieć znaczenie
inevitable | nieunikniony
to come in | pojawiać się, wchodzić do gry (np. o nowych czynnikach)
tip | wskazówka
to vary | różnić się
6 missed | pominięty
dehydration | odwodnienie
actually | właściwie, w rzeczywistości
to crave sth | mieć na coś wielką ochotę
to reflect sth | odzwierciedlać coś
to avoid sth | unikać czegoś
entirely | całkowicie, w pełni
dismissed | lekceważony, ignorowany
debilitating | osłabiający
brain disorder | zaburzenie neurologiczne
quite literally | całkiem dosłownie
to shift sth | zmienić coś
public attitudes | postawy społeczne, nastawienie społeczeństwa
advocacy organisations | organizacje wsparcia, organizacje działające na rzecz praw pacjentów
don't roll your eyes | nie przewracaj oczami
to take a pill | wziąć tabletkę
to deal with sth | radzić sobie z czymś

Zeskanuj kod telefonem i pobierz mini dodatek do tego artykułu
Neurological Vocabulary

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Conversation Matters Bank Matters



by Kamil Drożdżyk

This time in Conversation Matters we go through some practical dialogues one might have at the bank – from opening an account, to taking out a loan. Money talks, so let's get acquainted with some common bank-related vocab and phrases.

to open an account | otworzyć konto
to take out a loan | wziąć kredyt, pożyczkę
to get acquainted with sth | zapoznać się z czymś
bank-related | związany z bankiem

OPENING AN ACCOUNT

A few days after his eighteenth birthday, Rick goes to the bank to open his first ever account. He doesn't know much about banking, but the employee is very helpful.

Rick: Hello, I'd like to open an account.
Banker: Good morning. What kind of account would you like to open?
Rick: I'm not sure – I guess I'd just like to deposit some money and be able to make contactless payments.
Banker: I see. In that case, I recommend opening a current account. It's suitable for daily spending. As for payments, we can offer you a debit card.
Rick: What's the difference between a debit and a credit card?
Banker: To put it briefly, a debit card allows you to pay with or withdraw only the money you already have in your account. A credit card, on the other hand, lets you borrow money from the bank to pay for things now and pay it back later – usually with interest if you don't pay on time.
Rick: Thank you, I think I get it. A debit card sounds like what I'd prefer, then.
Banker: I'm glad to help. How much money would you like to deposit in your current account?
Rick: Pretty much all I have in cash right now, so around ten thousand pounds.
Banker: And, if I may ask, how much money do you expect to spend per month?
Rick: I live with my parents, so not that much. I'd say maybe five hundred pounds a month.
Banker: In that case, I'd advise opening two accounts: a current account and a savings account. You could put, say, three thousand pounds in your current account and deposit the remaining seven thousand into a savings account. This way, the seven thousand will earn interest over time.
Rick: Really? Sounds good to me. I think I'll do that.
Banker: Great. Please, prepare your ID...

a few | kilka
employee | pracownik
to make contactless payments | dokonywać płatności zbliżeniowych
suitable for sth | odpowiedni do czegoś
to allow sb to do sth | pozwalać komuś coś zrobić, umożliwiać komuś zrobienie czegoś
to withdraw sth | wypłacić coś
on the other hand | z drugiej strony
to borrow sth from sth | pożyczyć coś od czegoś
interest | *tu:* odsetki, oprocentowanie
to pay on time | płacić na czas
pretty much | w zasadzie
to spend | wydawać (pieniądze)
to advise | doradzać
savings account | konto oszczędnościowe
to earn interest | przynosić odsetki
ID = identity document | dowód tożsamości

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GETTING A LOAN

Rick, now 22, works as a sales representative. However, he needs a car to get around town. He has found a used but mint-condition model, yet he can't quite afford it. He goes to the bank to ask for a loan.

Rick: Hello. I'd like to get a loan.
Banker: Certainly. Are you looking for a personal loan or a car loan?
Rick: A car loan. I found a car I'd like, but I don't have enough saved.
Banker: I understand. How much does the car cost?
Rick: It's listed for nine thousand pounds, but I reckon I could negotiate down to, like... seven. Dad's a mechanic, so he could probably find some hidden defects.
Banker: Ahem... I think we should stick to the listed price.
Rick: Sorry. Yes, that's nine thousand pounds, then. I already have four saved.
Banker: Alright, so you'd like to get a loan for five thousand pounds. Have you got a stable income?
Rick: Yes, I'm a sales representative. I've been working full-time for about a year.
Banker: Great. In that case, we can offer you a car loan for the remaining five thousand pounds. The loan term is usually between six months and three years. Do you know how long you'd like to take to pay it back?
Rick: A year and a half, I believe. What's the interest rate? What would the monthly payment be?
Banker: Let me check... With an interest rate of ten percent, it'd be around three hundred pounds a month for eighteen months.
Rick: I can work with that.
Banker: Great, then let's get started on the application.

sales representative | przedstawiciel handlowy
to get around town | poruszać się, przemieszczać się po mieście
mint-condition | w idealnym stanie, jak nowy
to afford sth | móc sobie na coś pozwolić
to ask for a loan | ubiegać się o kredyt, prosić o pożyczkę
certainly | *tu:* oczywiście
to look for sth | szukać czegoś
personal loan | kredyt gotówkowy, pożyczka osobista
car loan | kredyt samochodowy
to be listed for X | być wystawionym na sprzedaż za X
to reckon | sądzić, przypuszczać
to stick to sth | *tu:* trzymać się czegoś, zakładać coś
saved | zaoszczędzony
stable income | stały dochód
to work full-time | pracować na pełen etat
loan term | okres kredytowania
to pay sth back | spłacić coś
interest rate | oprocentowanie, odsetki

Money Idioms

- **to break the bank (kosztować fortunę)** – to cost more than one can afford
  The tickets are only twenty pounds. They won't break the bank.
- **cash cow (żyła złota, dojna krowa)** – a very profitable business
  Streaming services are a real cash cow.
- **to go Dutch (dzielić się wydatkami po równo, płacić za siebie)** – to split expenses between two or more people
  Bart wanted to pay for our dinner, but I insisted we go Dutch.
- **highway robbery (rozbój w biały dzień)** – being charged too much for something
  They asked two hundred pounds for this garbage? That's highway robbery to me.
- **a penny saved is a penny earned (ziarnko do ziarnka, a zbierze się miarka)** – it's wise to save money, as they accumulate over time
  I figured I wouldn't be buying another jacket. A penny saved is a penny earned.
- **quick buck (szybka kasa, buck – *pot.* dolar)** – money made in a short period of time
  I found a side gig to make a quick buck.



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Bank Vocabulary

- **ATM (Automated Teller Machine) (bankomat)** – a banking machine that allows customers to perform withdrawals and deposit money
- **balance (saldo)** – the amount of money held in an account
- **bank teller (kasjer bankowy)** – a bank employee whose job is to pay out and take in money in a bank
- **deposit (depozyt, wpłata)** – placing money in a bank account
- **interest (odsetki, oprocentowanie)** – money paid for the use of money lent
- **loan (pożyczka, kredyt)** – money lent by a bank
- **withdrawal (wypłata pieniędzy z konta)** – removing money from a bank account

MORTGAGE CONSULTATION

Rick is now 31. He has been working steadily and saving money for years. Finally, he feels ready to buy a place to call his own. He visits the bank to discuss getting a mortgage.

Rick: Good morning. I'd like to talk to someone about getting a mortgage.
Banker: Of course. I can help you with that. Are you looking to buy your first home?
Rick: Yes. I've been renting for a while, but I think it's time to buy my own flat.
Banker: That's great. Do you already have a property in mind?
Rick: Yes, I found a small two-bedroom flat for about two hundred and ten thousand pounds.
Banker: And how much have you saved for the deposit?
Rick: Forty thousand, give or take.
Banker: That's solid. What kind of monthly payment are you comfortable with?
Rick: Somewhere around eight hundred to nine hundred pounds a month would be ideal.
Banker: A 25-year term might work best, then. We'll check what interest rate you qualify for, based on your income and credit history. We'll also need documents such as your ID, bank statements, and proof of deposit.
Rick: That's fine. I can bring them tomorrow.
Banker: Great. Once we review your documents and pre-approve you, you'll be able to make an offer on the flat.

mortgage consultation | konsultacja kredytu hipotecznego
to work steadily | mieć stabilną pracę
to get a mortgage | dostać, wziąć kredyt hipoteczny
to rent sth | wynajmować coś
property | nieruchomość
give or take | mniej więcej, plus minus
monthly payment | miesięczna rata
income | dochód
proof of deposit | potwierdzenie wkładu własnego
to pre-approve sb | wstępnie zatwierdzić kogoś (np. do kredytu)
flat | mieszkanie



Bank Collocations

- How did you get so much money? Did you rob a bank?
- Who knows what's really inside the bank vault.
- The victims of the bank fraud are still waiting for compensation.
- We need to verify your bank details.
- I bank on Jeremy to help me with finances.

to rob a bank | obrabować bank, napaść na bank
bank vault | sejf, skarbiec bankowy
victim | ofiara
bank fraud | oszustwo bankowe, defraudacja
to wait for compensation | czekać na odszkodowanie, rekompensatę
to bank on sb | liczyć na kogoś, polegać na kimś

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C. Hoare & Co.



C. Hoare & Co., often referred to simply as *Hoares*, is the oldest bank in the United Kingdom still in continuous operation. It was founded in 1672 by goldsmith-banker Sir Richard Hoare. Despite its age, it remains a privately owned family bank. Although it is the oldest surviving British bank, it is considered the fourth oldest privately owned bank in the world. The title of the very oldest bank in the world belongs to the Italian Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena, which has been operating since 1472.

goldsmith-banker | złotnik-bankier (rzemieślnik zajmujący się złotem, który prowadził także usługi bankowe)
despite sth | pomimo czegoś
privately owned | posiadany przez osoby prywatne
although | chociaż
considered | uważany, uznawany za



FRAUD CALL

One day, a now middle-aged Rick gets a phone call while relaxing at his flat (for which he still pays mortgage). A suspicious conversation ensues.

Stranger: Hello. I'm Timothy Chap from Sterling National Bank. Am I speaking to Richard Blake?
Rick: Yes, this is Richard. What's the matter?
Stranger: Sorry to bother you, but there has been an incident. I'm afraid your account is compromised.
Rick: In what way?
Stranger: We've been notified about suspicious activity on your account. I'm here to help you secure it.
Rick: What suspicious activity?
Stranger: Umm... We're seeing a lot of login attempts from Switzerland, sir. Are you in Switzerland?
Rick: No, I'm at home in London.
Stranger: Exactly. To help you secure your account, first I'd like to ask you for your bank account number.
Rick: Can't you already see my account number?
Stranger: Of course I can, sir. However, I need to verify you before we can proceed.
Rick: And what happens after I give you my account number? Take me through the process, step by step.
Stranger: Then I will send you a secure verification email, and you'll need to enter your password there so we can confirm it's really you. Only then can we stop whoever is trying to access your account.
Rick: I'm calling the police.
Stranger: Sir, the police have already been notified. This is very urgent.
Rick: You're not from the bank! You're a fraudster. I'm hanging up.

fraud call | telefon od oszusta
middle-aged | w średnim wieku
to pay mortgage | spłacać kredyt hipoteczny
suspicious | podejrzany, wzbudzający podejrzenia
to ensue | *tu:* wywiązać się, następować, zaistnieć
to bother sb | przeszkadzać, niepokoić kogoś
account | konto (np. bankowe)
compromised | zagrożony
to secure sth | zabezpieczyć coś
login attempts | próby logowania
bank account number | numer konta bankowego
step by step | krok po kroku
secure verification email | bezpieczny e-mail weryfikacyjny
to enter one's password | wpisać swoje hasło
notified | powiadomiony, poinformowany
fraudster | oszust
I'm hanging up. | Rozłączam się.

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Commonly Occurring e-mailing Mistakes

by Jonathan Moore

When writing a message in a foreign language, it is important to use the correct collocations, or combinations of words. Unfortunately, some words – certain verbs and nouns – just don't go together. Other issues include reported speech and punctuation. The correct choice of style – formal or informal – and the use of articles (a/the) are also things that cause problems for non-natives, who certainly face an uphill struggle when trying to understand any of these nuances, let alone memorise and master them.

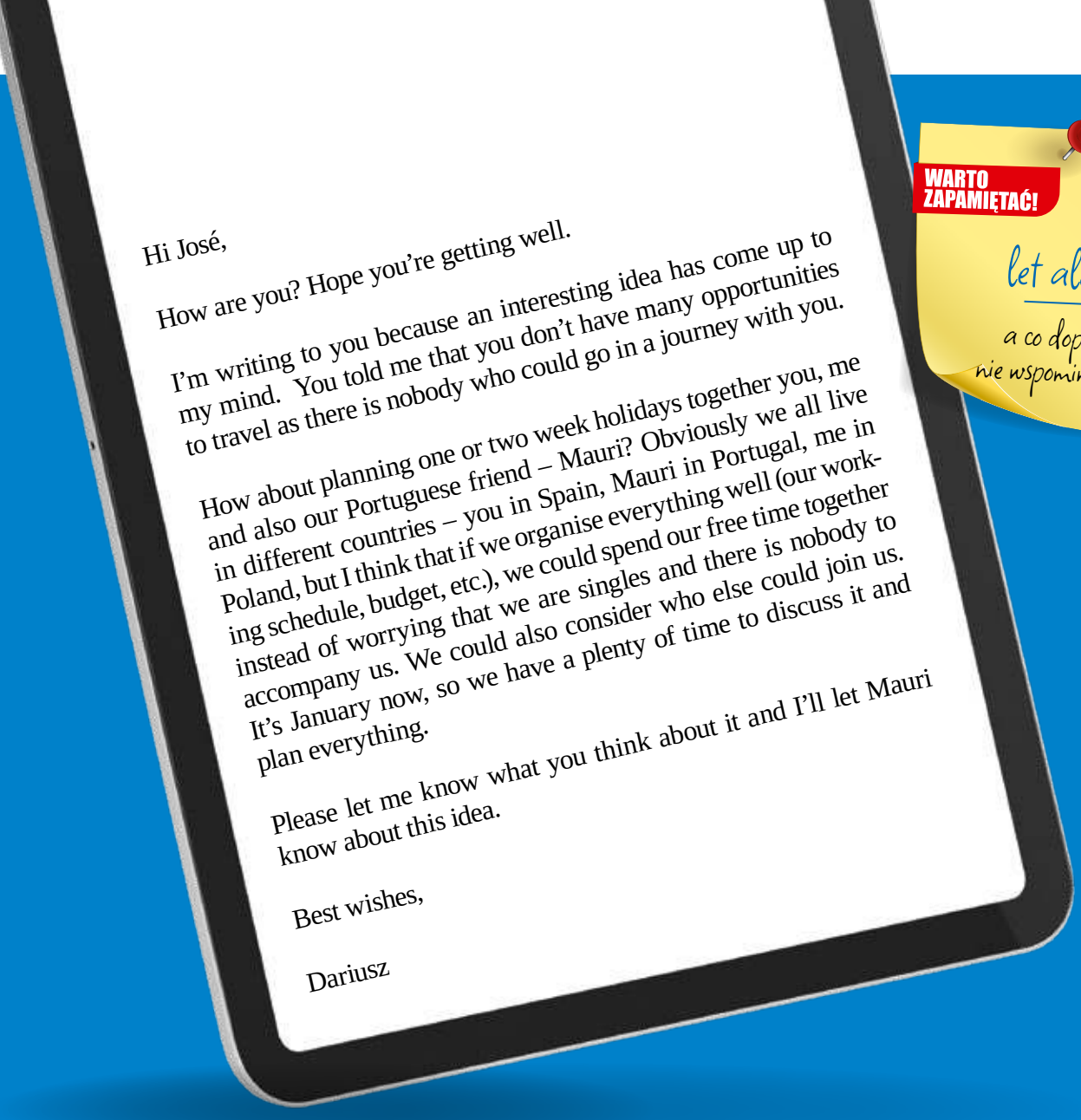


Here is a short imaginary informal e-mail from a Polish man called Dariusz to his Spanish friend José. Dariusz would like to go on holiday for one or two weeks with José. He would also like Mauri, his friend from Portugal, to join them. Many a non-native would probably think his message was written in correct English. However, native speakers will read it with a much more critical eye, which will notice a number of incorrect collocations.

0 unfortunately | niestety
to include sth | obejmować coś
reported speech | mowa zależna
punctuation | interpunkcja
to face an uphill struggle | toczyć ciężką walkę, mieć przed sobą trudne zadanie
let alone | a co dopiero/nie wspominając o
to master sth | opanować coś do perfekcji
1 however | jednakże
to notice sth | zauważyć coś

1

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WARTO ZAPAMIĘTAĆ!

let alone

a co dopiero, nie wspominając o

Language

Dariusz certainly hasn't written a bad message, as his ideas are basically comprehensible. Nonetheless, he hasn't necessarily chosen the right collocation in every case, which may lead to some misunderstandings. One example of this appears in the second sentence. The phrase "getting well" means recovering. Unless José was recovering from a lengthy disease at the time, Dariusz is likely to have hoped José was "getting on well" – in other words, coping well with life in general.

The next incorrect collocation is "an interesting idea has come up to my mind". It's brave of Dariusz to attempt to use a phrasal verb but he should really have made himself the subject of the idea. The correct version would have been "I've come up with an interesting idea".

The third faux pas is connected to the dreaded reported speech. Previously, José is likely to have told Dariusz *"I don't have many opportunities to travel and there is nobody who could go in a journey with me"*. This is direct speech. In reported speech, starting with the Past Simple, what José said also goes into the Past Simple. Moreover, in informal speech

2 comprehensible | zrozumiały
nonetheless | niemniej jednak
to lead to sth | prowadzić do czegoś
misunderstanding | nieporozumienie
to appear | pojawiać się
recovering | wracający do zdrowia, odzyskujący siły
unless | chyba, że
lengthy | długi, przeciągający się
disease | choroba
in other words | innymi słowy
to cope well with sth | dobrze sobie z czymś radzić
attempt to do sth | próba zrobienia czegoś
subject | *tu:* podmiot
3 I've come up with an interesting idea. | Wpadłem na ciekawy pomysł.
dreaded | budzący grozę, straszny
previously | poprzednio, wcześniej
direct speech | mowa niezależna
moreover | co więcej, ponadto

2 3

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and writing, the conjunction *that* is frequently omitted, so the correct version would be *You told me (that) you didn't have many opportunities to travel*. In the same sentence, Dariusz uses the incorrect preposition when he writes *go in a journey*. Here, in should be replaced with *on*. Although the phrase *there's nobody who could go on a journey with* you is technically correct, in practice, a native speaker is more likely to use a more simple construction: "nobody to go on a journey with you", which sounds more natural. So, the correct sentence would be: *You told me (that) you didn't have many opportunities to travel and* there *was nobody to go on a journey with you*.

Another issue is punctuation. At the beginning of the second main paragraph, Dariusz writes *How about planning one or two week holidays together you, me and also our Portuguese friend – Mauri?* This is almost correct, at least in this informal context. However, for clarity, there should be a question mark after *together*, while the dash near the end is unnecessary, giving *How about planning one or two week holidays together? You, me and also our Portuguese friend – Mauri?* Similarly, a comma should be inserted after *Obviously* in the next sentence, as the sentence begins with a single-word adverb. On the other hand, because there is a dash before *you in Spain* , the comma after *Poland* should be replaced with a dash, giving a piece of information between two dashes. Therefore, the correct construction would be *Obviously we all live in different countries – you in Spain, Mauri in Portugal, me in Poland – but I think…*

Towards the end of the same sentence, we come to an unnatural sounding construction: *instead of worrying that we are singles and there is nobody to accompany us*. Firstly, even if Dariusz has used one prepositional phrase correctly, a second prepositional phrase is required for correctness. Secondly, full verb forms like *there is* are normally contracted in informal English, giving *there's*. Thirdly, *accompany* is correct but rather formal, so it should really give way to *go with*. So, the correct construction would be *instead of worrying about being single and having nobody to go with us*. In the next sentence, we have more examples of overly formal language in the form of two long verbs: *consider* and discuss. To make the message more informal, these should be replaced with phrasal verbs *think about* and *talk about* respectively. Moreover, *a* does not occur before *plenty*, so Mariusz and his friends don't have *a plenty of time*, just *plenty of time*.

In the final paragraph, Dariusz starts the sentence with *Please*, which sounds too formal. In fact, it sounds as if he's begging José for feedback, which is highly unlikely. He also writes *let me know what you think about it*. In reality, *about it* is not necessary and might as well be left out. Lastly, *I'll let Mauri know about the idea* is grammatically correct but sounds rather unnatural. After telling José, a native speaker would probably say: *I'll let Mauri know, too.*

4 conjunction | spójnik (np. and, but, that)
omitted | p/ominięty
to be replaced with sth | zostać zastąpionym przez coś
at least | przynajmniej, co najmniej
dash | myślnik
inserted | wstawiony
obviously | oczywiście, najwyraźniej
on the other hand | z drugiej strony
therefore | dlatego
towards the end of sth | pod koniec czegoś
instead of sth | zamiast czegoś
required | wymagany
contracted | skrócony, ściągnięty
overly | nadmiernie, zbyt
respectively | odpowiednio
to beg sb | błagać kogoś
feedback | informacja zwrotna
to be highly unlikely | być bardzo mało prawdopodobnym
to be left out | zostać pominiętym
lastly | na koniec

4

Accents Across Canada: More Than Just "Eh?"

Aleksandra Zemła

Canada is a large country that extends from east to west, from Ontario to British Columbia, out to the Maritimes, travellers used to only see Canada for its nasalised accents. Now, let us embark on a journey with Canadian English and explore its accented twists and turns.



nasalized | nosowy (np. o głosce)
to embark on a journey | wyruszyć w podróż
twists and turns | zawiłości, nieoczekiwane zwroty akcji

Language

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The "Standard" That's Not So Standard

Start with what most people consider to be the "Canadian accent" – that clean, mellow tone you hear from the news anchor in Toronto or Vancouver. It's called General Canadian, and it's the closest thing we have to a national sound. But even here, there are quirks. Ever heard of Canadian Raising? It's why Americans think we say "aboot" instead of "about". We don't, by the way. It's just a vowel thing – blame the phonetics, not us. Also, we love smoothing out our T's. "Toronto" becomes "Tronno", "butter" becomes "budder", and party is basically just a mumble if we're tired.

to consider sth | rozważać coś
mellow | łagodny, stonowany
news anchor | prezenter wiadomości
quirks | dziwactwa, maniery, osobliwe nawyki
instead of sth | zamiast czegoś
by the way | przy okazji
to blame sth | obwiniać coś
to smooth out sth | wygładzić coś
mumble | mamrotanie

The Prairie Stretch

Venture out to Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba and you'll notice something: a bit of a Western twang. It's subtle, but it's there – especially in rural areas. You might catch flatter vowels and a tone that leans ever so slightly towards American Midwest. In small towns, people might throw in a "right" for emphasis – "It's right cold out today" – and still talk about "skidoos" like it's the most normal thing in the world. (It is, to them.)

to venture out to X | zapuścić się do/w X
to notice sth | zauważyć, dostrzec coś
Western twang | zachodni „twang" (specyficzny, nosowy sposób mówienia charakterystyczny dla zachodnich regionów, np. w USA czy Kanadzie)
subtle | subtelny, delikatny
rural | wiejski
flatter | bardziej płaski
vowel | samogłoska
to lean towards sth | skłaniać się ku czemuś
emphasis | nacisk, akcent, podkreślenie
skidoos | skutery śnieżne (termin popularny szczególnie w Kanadzie i północnych USA, pochodzący od nazwy marki Ski-Doo)

WARTO ZAPAMIĘTAĆ!

news anchor
prezenter wiadomości

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The East Coast: Now We're Talking

And then… there's Newfoundland. Oh boy. This isn't just an accent – it's an adventure. Influenced by centuries of Irish, English and Scottish settlers, Newfoundland English is full of lilts, slang and expressions you won't hear anywhere else. Words like "b'y" (as in "Yes b'y!") or "scoff" (meaning a big meal) are just the beginning. The accent itself can sound musical – like storytelling in every sentence. Nova Scotia and PEI have their own East Coast charm, too – less dramatic than Newfoundland, but still cosy and full of character. You might catch hints of Gaelic rhythm if you listen closely.

influenced by sb | pod wpływem kogoś, zainspirowany przez kogoś
settler | osadnik
lilts | melodyjne brzmienia (zazwyczaj o wznoszącej się i opadającej intonacji głosu, charakterystycznej np. dla akcentu irlandzkiego lub szkockiego)
b'y | *dialekt:* gość, facet, kumpel (skrót od boy, bardzo charakterystyczny dla dialektu Nowej Fundlandii, używany bez względu na wiek rozmówcy)
meal | posiłek
PEI = Prince Edward Island | Wyspa Księcia Edwarda (najmniejsza prowincja Kanady)
cosy | przytulny
hints of sth | nutki czegoś, ślady czegoś

Montreal: A Little French Finesse

In Quebec, English comes with a twist. Anglophone Montrealers might sound just a little different – vowels shaped by French, a rhythm that's smoother or more staccato. It's subtle, but lovely. And if you're learning French in Quebec? Bon courage. That accent has a whole story on its own. (But hey, if you can order a poutine in both languages, you're doing fine.)

to come with a twist | *tu:* mieć nietypowy element
shaped by sth | ukształtowany przez coś
Bon courage. | *franc.* Powodzenia
on its own | sam w sobie
to order sth | zamówić coś
poutine | poutine (kanadyjskie danie: frytki z sosem i serem)

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The Northern Blend

Up in the territories – Yukon, Northwest Territories Nunavut – English often dances to a different beat. Many speakers grow up multilingual, speaking indigenous languages like Inuktitut or Dene alongside English. That creates speech patterns you won't hear anywhere else: rhythmic, melodic, and beautifully unique. These voices deserve way more attention in the Canadian accent conversation – and they're an essential part of the full picture.

to dance to a different beat | robić coś po swojemu, wyróżniać się, nie podążać za tłumem, *dosł.* tańczyć do innego rytmu
indigenous | rdzenny
alongside X | obok X
speech pattern | sposób mówienia, wzorzec wymowy
to deserve way more attention | zasługiwać na znacznie więcej uwagi

So… What's the Deal With "Eh?"

Ah yes. The famous "eh." Is it really a thing?

Yes. Absolutely. But it's not just a filler – it's functional. It can mean "don't you agree?", "right?", "huh?", "I'm annoyed," or just "I'm done talking now, your turn." Try using it with the right tone, and you'll be halfway to sounding like a local.

What's the deal with X? | O co chodzi z X?
Is it really a thing? | Czy to naprawdę istnieje?/Czy to faktycznie jest popularne/modne?
filler | wypełniacz konwersacji np. „yyy", „no", który nie wnosi treści, ale daje czas na myślenie
annoyed | zirytowany, rozdrażniony
I'm done talking now, your turn. | Skończyłem mówić, teraz twoja kolej.
to be halfway to sth | być w połowie drogi do czegoś

City Talk vs. Country Talk

It's not all about geography – cities vs. rural areas can sound totally different, even in the same provinces. In Toronto, for example, a new urban accent is growing among younger speakers, influenced by Caribbean English, Somali, and slang culture. So if you hear someone drop a "mans" (as in "Mans is hungry") or say "ting" instead of "thing", that's not bad grammar – that's Toronto, 2025 style.

to drop sth | *tu:* pominąć coś, opuścić (np. dźwięk w słowie)
Mans is hungry | *slang:* „Jestem głodny" lub „On jest głodny"

A Living Language

What makes Canadian English so fascinating is that it's always evolving. Whether it's the influence of immigration, the digital age, or indigenous languages reclaiming space, our speech reflects who we are – and where we're headed. Listen to people in a classroom, a hockey rink, or a coffee shop, and you'll hear stories in every syllable. That's the beauty of language: it connects us, surprises us, and reminds us that Canada's voice is anything but one-size-fits-all.

to evolve | ewoluować, rozwijać się
whether | czy
to reclaim space | odzyskiwać przestrzeń
to reflect sth | odzwierciedlać coś
to be headed | zmierzać dokądś, kierować się dokądś
hockey rink | lodowisko do hokeja
to connect sb | łączyć kogoś
one-size-fits-all | uniwersalny, szablonowy, *dosł.* „jeden rozmiar dla wszystkich"

Accents on the World Stage

Canadian English doesn't just stay within its borders – it travels. Thanks to music, movie, YouTube, and TikTok, the way we speak is showing up in unexpected places. Sometimes people abroad mistake the Canadian accent for American – and who can blame them? General Canadian and General American are close cousins. But listen a little longer and the differences start to emerge: that lifted "ou" sound, the softer "r", or the occasional "eh" that sneaks into conversation. And now, Canadian artists, streamers and actors are proudly letting their accents shine, instead of toning them down. Whether it's Simu Liu, Sandra Oh, or your favourite TikTok creator from Mississauga, the Canadian voice is going global – and unapologetically so. At the same time, Canadian English imports sounds too. With so much media crossing borders, it's not unusual to hear a teen in Vancouver say something with a light London lilt or New York slang. Canadian accents are flexible, dynamic, and wide open to influence.

to stay within its borders | pozostawać w swoich granicach
abroad | za granicą
to emerge | wyłaniać się
lifted | wzniesiony
to sneak into sth | wkraść się w coś
to let sth shine | pozwolić czemuś błyszczeć, wyeksponować coś
to tone sth down | stonować coś, złagodzić
unapologetically | bez przepraszania, bez poczucia winy, z pewnością siebie
to cross borders | przekraczać granice
teen | *pot.* nastolatek
flexible | elastyczny
wide open | szeroko otwarty

We Sound Great, Eh?

Canada's accents are like our seasons – no two are exactly alike, and you never know what you'll get until you're there. From buttery smooth city voices to musical island tones, we've got layers. So next time someone says Canadians "don't have an accent", just smile. Then take them on a cross-country road trip – and let our voices do the talking.

no two are exactly alike | nie ma dwóch dokładnie takich samych
buttery smooth | *dosł.* płynny jak masło
layer | warstwa
to let sth do the talking | pozwolić, by coś mówiło samo za siebie

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Bohemia's Best

NAGRANIA MP3
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KOD DOSTĘPU: sme
LUB ODSŁUCHAJ NA STRONIE englishmatters.pl
POBIERZ CZYTNIK KODÓW: COLORFULMEDIA.PL/CZYTNIK

by Kamil Drożdżyk

Ahoj! This time, we'll take a closer look at our third-smallest neighbour, with whom we share the longest border and centuries of rich history – the Czech Republic. This landlocked country feels comfortably familiar, yet different enough to captivate Polish tourists with both its culture and nature.

o to share sth | dzielić coś
landlocked | niemający dostępu do morza
to feel comfortably familiar | wydawać się znajomym w kojący sposób
to captivate sb | urzec, zafascynować kogoś



Prague

In a Nutshell

Population:	~ 10.9 million
Population density:	138.2/km²
Size:	78 868 km²
Capital:	Prague
Currency:	Czech koruna (CZK)

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The territory now known as the Czech Republic (or simply Czechia), given its central European location, has had a convoluted history. For centuries, Bohemia was a highly autonomous imperial estate of the Holy Roman Empire. However, religious and political tensions within the kingdom reached a breaking point in 1415 with the execution of reformer Jan Hus, sparking the Hussite Wars. Between the seventeenth and the late nineteenth centuries, it lost over a third of its population to wars, plagues and famines. Its culture and language were pushed to the brink of extinction when the weakened Bohemian lands were absorbed into Austria, and later – as one half of Czechoslovakia – the country fell under the Soviet sphere of influence.

However, the Czechs endured and did not let their layered culture and history be forgotten. Following the collapse of the Soviet bloc, the country split with Slovakia and became an independent country, remaining in this state since 1993.

Today, Czechia is a part of the European Union (which it joined alongside Poland in May 2004), NATO, and the Schengen Area, making it both very safe and easy to travel to. While there are no formal border controls between Poland and Czechia, Polish citizens are still legally required to carry a valid ID card or passport when visiting the country. Once you cross the border, the Czech Republic awaits.

Czech City Break

Many tourists from neighbouring countries opt to go to Czechia for a quick city break – and no wonder. The country's urban side is very eclectic and has a lot to offer to all kinds of travellers.

Let's start with the capital – Prague. The City of a Hundred Spires has gained its descriptive moniker for a reason: Prague's skyline is speckled with towers, belfries, steeples and spires. The Old Town Square is where you'll see some of the most impressive ones, such as the double spires towering over the Church of Our Lady before Týn. The Gothic church's towers are 80 metres tall. Impressive by modern standards, these structures become all the more spectacular considering they were built in the 14th century.

If you're into historic architecture, another must-see landmark is Prague Castle. The 8th-century compound, nowadays displaying mostly Baroque and Mannerist styles, was rebuilt and expanded many times over the centuries, resulting in some Gothic influence as well. Climbing to the very top of the castle rewards you with a breathtaking view of the city, where its countless towers prove that calling it the City of a *Hundred* Spires is an understatement.

While up there, you can plot your next steps just by looking around. But no matter what direction you choose, the Mother of Cities – a Czech nickname for Prague – will always remind you of its 1,200-year history.

And if you're not the type of tourist to call it a night and go to bed at 10 pm, Prague is known for its colourful nightlife. The capital city's many bars, pubs and clubs are great both for a few carefree nights out and for a civilised beer-tasting expedition.

Another noteworthy city popular with tourists is Olomouc. The sixth most populated Czech city is known for its numerous prominent religious landmarks, such as the Holy Trinity Column, Saint Wenceslas Cathedral, and the Church of Saint Michael, just to name a few.

Thanks to the Palacký University located in Olomouc, the city is considered a student town – a status it owes to a great deal of festivals and events held nearly continuously throughout the year.


Charles Bridge in Prague

belfry | dzwonnica
steeple | wieża kościelna
spire | iglica
to tower over sth | górować nad czymś
to be into sth | pasjonować się czymś, lubić coś
must-see | punkt obowiązkowy (coś, co koniecznie trzeba zobaczyć)
landmark | *tu:* zabytek
nowadays | w dzisiejszych czasach, obecnie
to display sth | prezentować coś

2 expanded | rozszerzony, rozbudowany
to result in sth | skutkować czymś
to reward sb with sth | nagrodzić kogoś czymś
countless | niezliczony
to prove that | udowadniać, że
understatement | niedopowiedzenie
to plot sth | *tu:* planować coś
no matter | nieważne
nickname | przezwisko, ksywka
to call it a night | skończyć na dziś, udać się na odpoczynek
a few | kilka
carefree | beztroski
noteworthy | godny uwagi, wart odnotowania
numerous | liczne
just to name a few | by wymienić tylko kilka

1 convoluted | zawiły, skomplikowany
to spark sth | wywołać coś
Hussite Wars | wojny husyckie
plague | dżuma, zaraza
famine | głód (klęska głodu)
to be pushed to the brink of extinction | zostać doprowadzonym na skraj wyginięcia
to weaken sth | osłabić coś
to fall under the Soviet sphere of influence | znaleźć się w radzieckiej strefie wpływów
to endure | przetrwać
layered | wielowarstwowy
following X | po X, w następstwie X
collapse | upadek
to split with sth | *tu:* odłączyć się od czegoś
to remain | pozostać
to await | oczekiwać, czekać
city break | krótki, kilkudniowy wyjazd do jakiegoś miasta
neighbouring | sąsiedni, sąsiadujący
no wonder | nic dziwnego
urban | miejski
descriptive | opisowy
moniker | przydomek, ksywka

considered | uważany
to owe sth | zawdzięczać coś
a great deal of sth | bardzo dużo czegoś

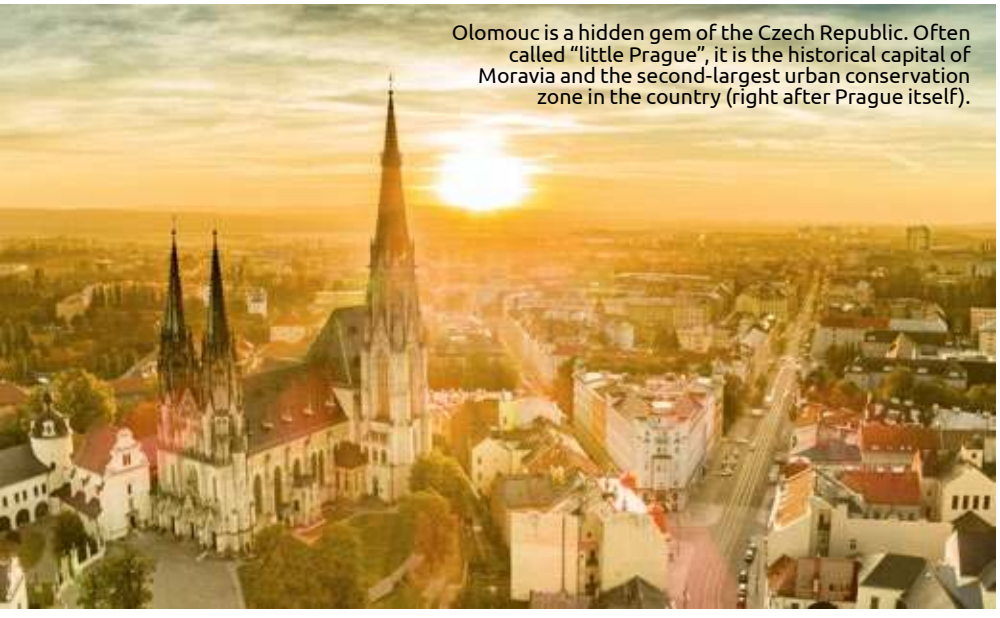
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WARTO ZAPAMIĘTAĆ!

to call it a night

skończyć na dziś, udać się na odpoczynek



Olomouc is a hidden gem of the Czech Republic. Often called "little Prague", it is the historical capital of Moravia and the second-largest urban conservation zone in the country (right after Prague itself).

With more than twenty thousand students enrolled at Palacký University, Olomouc remains one of the busiest student hubs in Europe; and where there are students, there's entertainment.

Naturally, there's more to see in the urban side of Czechia. It would, however, take another issue to describe everything there is to see and do in Brno, Karlovy Vary, Český Krumlov, Mikulov, or Telč, and that's only scratching the surface.

One is certain: the Czech Republic is home to some of the most remarkable, fairytale-like old towns in all of Europe, and aside from a selection of great monuments, many Czech cities also offer endless entertainment.

When it comes to accessibility, most Czech cities are pretty easy to navigate and move around. The country has excellent affordable public transport with a convenient, modern app-based ticketing system. But, even if you miss your bus, taxi services such as Bolt and Uber have first-rate coverage in urban areas.

Service workers in tourist-oriented places usually speak English well; however, it's probably not a concern to your average Polish tourist, whose language is so similar to Czech that they might as well just speak Polish to get by. In terms of affordability, Czech cities are usually considered rather light on your wallet – certainly lighter than most western European cities like Paris, Rome or Madrid.

3 enrolled at sth | zapisany na coś
student hub | centrum studenckie, ośrodek skupiający studentów
entertainment | rozrywka
to scratch the surface | zaledwie dotknąć tematu, *dosł.* drapać po powierzchni
4 fairytale-like | bajkowy, jak z bajki
aside from X | poza X, pomijając X
when it comes to X | jeśli chodzi o X
affordable | przystępny cenowo
app-based | oparty na aplikacji
ticketing system | system biletowy
5 first-rate coverage | doskonały zasięg
concern | obawa
average | przeciętny
to get by | radzić sobie, dawać sobie radę
in terms of sth | pod względem czegoś

3 4 5

Travel

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Český Krumlov is one of the most beautiful and picturesque towns in the Czech Republic, located in Southern Bohemia on the winding Vltava River.



Czechia's Natural Side

Away from the busy cities, Czechia offers many quiet places ideal for more nature-oriented tourism. The country has four national parks, as well as many protected landscape areas, reserves, and natural monuments.

In the north of the Czech Republic, there is a familiar mountain range – the Sudetes. In the Czech part of the range, it's worth visiting the Orlické Mountains. The small settlement of Neratov is home to only around sixty residents, but it's been gaining popularity recently as a tourist destination. The village offers a local brewery, stunning gardens, a church with a glass roof, and a restored historical footbridge that crosses the Polish border.

But the Neratov bridge is just a foretaste of the famous Sky Bridge 721, located roughly 30-40 kilometres to the east of the Orlické Mountains. The 721-metre long suspension footbridge allows tourists to view the valley near the Králický Sněžník mountain from a height of up to 95 metres above the ground. Nerves of steel required; those with fear of heights are not advised to try it.

If you're looking to conquer a foreign mountain range, don't worry – geographically, Czechia is essentially a basin, surrounded by mountains from all sides. You could, for example, visit Šumava (the Bohemian Forest), located around the border with Germany and Austria. There, you'll experience a rare terrain type: the region is known for extensive peat bogs (wetlands with an accumulation of moss-like plant matter), which cover roughly a third of the Šumava National Park's territory.

And if you want to obtain bragging rights for visiting three countries in one go, definitely visit the Šumava Tripoint Monument located right where the borders of Czechia, Austria and Germany meet. The spot is surrounded by dead trees, making it a slightly spooky, yet a breathtaking sight.

Mountaineers will surely appreciate Czechia's many ranges, but what if you're looking for something different? If you prefer water, Czechia has something just for you – the Hranice Abyss is the deepest flooded cave in the world. If you're into

6 away from X | z dala od X
nature-oriented | nastawiony na naturę, zainteresowany naturą, przyrodą
mountain range | pasmo górskie
worth sth | wart/y czegoś
settlement | osada
brewery | browar
restored | odrestaurowany, odnowiony
7 footbridge | kładka, most (dla pieszych)
foretaste | przedsmak
suspension footbridge | wisząca kładka dla pieszych
to allow sb to do sth | pozwalać komuś na zrobienie czegoś, umożliwiać komuś coś
Nerves of steel required; fear of heights not advised. | Wymagane stalowe nerwy; lęk wysokości niewskazany.
basin | zagłębienie, niecka
8 border with sth | granica z czymś
extensive | rozległy, obszerny
peat bogs | torfowiska
wetlands | tereny podmokłe, mokradła
moss-like | mchopodobny, przypominający mech
to cover sth | pokrywać coś
to obtain sth | uzyskać coś
bragging rights for sth | prawo do po/chwalenia się czymś
in one go | za jednym razem
slightly | *tu:* nieco, trochę
spooky | upiorny, straszny
mountaineer | alpinista, taternik
to appreciate sth | doceniać coś
the deepest flooded cave | najgłębsza zalana jaskinia

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extreme sports, you could join a diving expedition (but never try it alone, especially if you're an amateur). However, with its depth of 519.5 metres, it's not recommended for thalassophobes. Many tourists just choose to *look* into the abyss, instead of diving into it – and frankly, that's quite an experience, too.

Another record-breaking body of water in Czechia is Rožmberk. In connection with its relatively shallow depth (around 6 metres deep at the deepest point), Rožmberk's total area of 4.89 km^2 makes it an abnormally large pool still classified as a pond. Not quite deep enough to be called a lake, Rožmberk has to settle on the title of the biggest pond in the world. Tourists can take a closer look at this somewhat unusual body of water from nearby hiking and cycling trails.

For forest hikers, Toulovcovy maštale is a must-visit. The nature reserve, dubbed the rock city in English (Skalní město), is easy to miss – it's hidden in a relatively small forest between two inconspicuous villages in the Pardubice region: Bor u Skutče and Jarošov. What makes it special is the labyrinth-like sandstone rock formations tucked in the middle of the woods. Those who've seen it with their own eyes agree: the location is simply unforgettable.

Despite being a relatively small country, the sheer density of magnificent views of nature ensures that, when in Czechia, you're never too far away from the nearest natural wonder.

Tourist Attraction

After a pandemic-caused lull, Czechia's tourism is booming again, breaking new records every year. In 2024, the country saw over twenty million tourists staying there for at least one night. Looking at the reviews of many tourist attractions, landmarks, services and natural wonders, hardly anyone leaves disappointed. So, whether you're planning to go on a tour, or just hop over the border for a day, rest assured the Czech Republic will deliver.

dive expedition | wyprawa nurkowa
thalassophobe | talasofob (osoba bojąca się głębi morskiej lub dużych zbiorników wodnych)



Konopiště is one of the most fascinating castles in the Czech Republic, located about 40 km south of Prague.



9 abyss | otchłań, przepaść
instead of sth | zamiast czegoś
frankly | szczerze mówiąc
record-breaking | rekordowy, bijący rekordy
body of water | zbiornik wodny, akwen
pond | staw
hiking and cycling trails | szlaki piesze i rowerowe
dubbed | nazwany
hidden | ukryty
inconspicuous | niepozorny, nierzucający się w oczy
sandstone rock formations | formacje skalne z piaskowca
tucked | schowany, wciśnięty
in the middle of sth | w środku czegoś
despite sth | po/mimo czegoś
density | gęstość
pandemic-caused lull | zastój spowodowany pandemią
to boom | przeżywać rozkwit
at least | przynajmniej, co najmniej
review | recenzja, opinia
hardly anyone leaves disappointed | prawie nikt nie wyjeżdża rozczarowany
to hop over the border for a day | skoczyć za granicę na jeden dzień
rest assured the Czech Republic will deliver | możesz być spokojny, że Czechy spełnią oczekiwania/nie zawiodą

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How about Learning English with... an Alien?

by Hanna Danielczak-Ziadi

Are you looking for a light and cheerful series set in a picturesque mountain landscape? If so, we encourage you to check out Resident Alien, starring the excellent Alan Tudyk in the lead role. The series was produced between 2021 and 2025, and its creator is Chris Sheridan. The overall atmosphere of the show strongly resembles the once-popular 1990s series Northern Exposure (created by Joshua Brand).

In Resident Alien, however, the local doctor – due to a chain of extraordinary circumstances, both earthly and extraterrestrial – turns out to be an alien who is so well adapted that no one, except a young boy, is able to recognise him. We can confidently recommend the series to anyone who is at least slightly distanced from the human species – the alien's reflections and his dialogues with humans fall squarely into the realm of dark comedy.

When my ship crashed, I lost precious cargo – a device I need to complete my mission. Podczas katastrofy straciłem cenny ładunek – urządzenie, którego potrzebuję, żeby ukończyć moją misję.

I've never been into town. It's just too risky. Nigdy nie byłem w miasteczku. To po prostu zbyt ryzykowne.

Plus they don't have a pizza place and the Internet said that parking was a nightmare. Na dodatek, w Internecie piszą, że nie ma tu pizzerii ani miejsc parkingowych.

But here I am. To pass my first real test. Ale oto jestem. Zdać mój pierwszy test.

If the universe had a scale for intelligence, humans would land right below lizards. Ludzie plasują się w rankingu inteligencji tuż za jaszczurkami.

I'm gonna go across the street to The 59 to get a drink if you want to come. Idę do baru The 59 naprzeciwko na drinka, dołączysz?

I have work to do. Mam coś do zrobienia.

The autopsy's done. What work do you have to do at 8 at night? Autopsja jest zrobiona. Co masz do zrobienia o 8 wieczorem?

I strangled and drowned a guy four months ago and I have to search the lake for his corpse before some fisherman finds it.* Udusiłem i utopiłem faceta cztery miesiące temu i muszę znaleźć jego ciało w jeziorze zanim znajdzie je jakiś rybak.

Stuff. To i owo.

Suit yourself. Jak chcesz.

Feel free to come by if you ever stop being a weirdo. Wpadnij jak przestaniesz dziwaczyć.

Weirdo? That's not good.* Dziwak? To nie komplement.

Now I have to meet her over there and prove to her I fit in, that I'm normal like them. Teraz muszę tam iść i udowodnić jej, że pasuję do reszty, że jestem normalny jak oni.

* These lines are the main character's thoughts, which he does not say out loud.

Rack Your Brain

by Kamil Drożdżyk

1. True or False

a. Prague is often called the City of a Hundred Bridges.
b. Over 75% of the world's population plays video games.
c. In the early stages of her career, Dame Patricia Routledge was mostly a theatrical actress.
d. A power supply unit is used to provide power to computer components.
e. Dame Patricia Routledge was an advocate of clear pronunciation.

Answer Key: a. false; b. false; c. true; d. true; e. true

2. Fill in the gaps with the correct words.

moniker, leisure, pensioner, hardware, sense

a. Josh works in IT. He's great with software, but he doesn't know much about _____.
b. Sarah is seventy; she doesn't work anymore. She's a _____.
c. If your graphics card is top-notch, but your CPU is subpar, you won't be able to run new games. It's common _____.
d. A nickname is a _____ of sorts you use online.
e. Video games are becoming an increasingly common form of _____.

Answer Key: a. hardware; b. pensioner; c. sense; d. moniker; e. leisure

3. Connect the words to create common collocations.

main, bombing, hard, hiking, bragging

a. ...trail
b. ...role
c. ...drive
d. ...rights
e. ...raid

Answer Key: a. hiking trail; b. main role; c. hard drive; d. bragging rights; e. bombing raid

4. Reorder the words to make correct sentences.

a. It's / upgrade / to / time / PC. / my
_____
b. actress. / She's / extremely / an / talented
_____
c. Czechia? / you / been / Have / to / ever
_____
d. headset / The / plug / play. / and / is
_____
e. Bill / enjoy / doesn't / as / as / I / do. / games / much / PvP
_____

Answer Key: a. It's time to upgrade my PC.; b. She's an extremely talented actress.; c. Have you ever been to Czechia?; d. The headset is plug and play.; e. Bill doesn't enjoy PvP games as much as I do.

5. Which of these computer parts isn't necessary for the computer to work?

a. CPU
b. power supply unit
c. speakers
d. motherboard

Answer: c

6. What is Dame Patricia Routledge's best known role?

a. Hyacinth Bucket
b. Operetta Candide
c. Hetty Wainthropp
d. Daisy Rose

Answer: a

7. Which video game genre usually allows players to create their own characters and make their own choices?

a. FPS
b. hack'n'slash
c. puzzle game
d. RPG

Answer: d

8. Why did the character of Hyacinth Bucket always correct the pronunciation of her name to Bouquet?

a. Because that's how it was really pronounced.
b. Because she wanted to come off as a more distinguished woman.
c. Because she was originally French.
d. Because it was easier to pronounce.

Answer: b

9. What makes Prague's skyline so interesting?

a. It's almost completely flat.
b. It's full of towers, belfries and spires.
c. It's full of skyscrapers.
d. You can see the Sudetes in the background.

Answer: b

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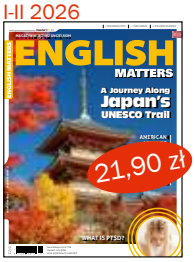
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Numery archiwalne i wydania specjalne

Numery archiwalne **English Matters**

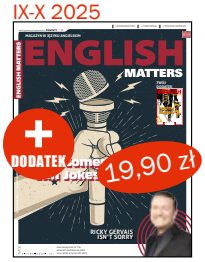
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nr 115
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nr 114
IX-X 2025



nr 113
VII-VIII 2025



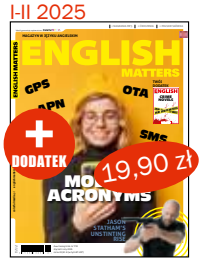
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nr 111
III-IV 2025



nr 110
I-II 2025



nr 109
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nr 107
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nr 106
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nr 105
III-IV 2024



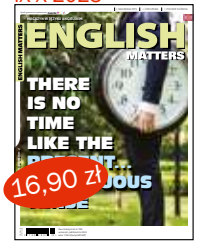
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nr 103
XI-XII 2023



nr 102
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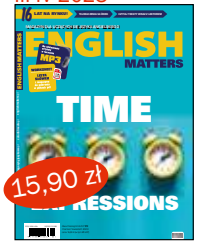
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nr 99
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nr 98
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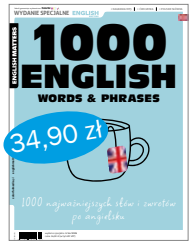


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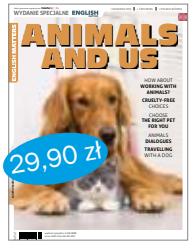


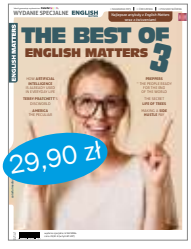
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IX-X 2022

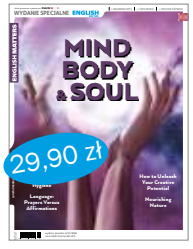




Wydania specjalne **English Matters**

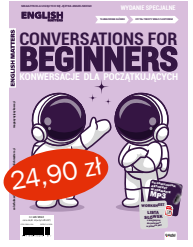


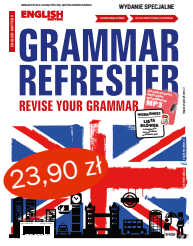


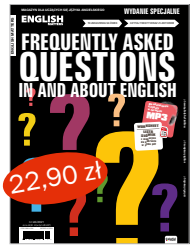




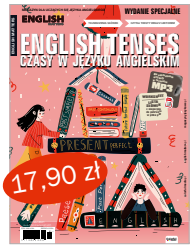






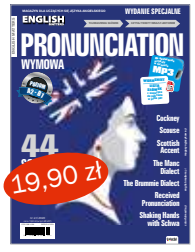














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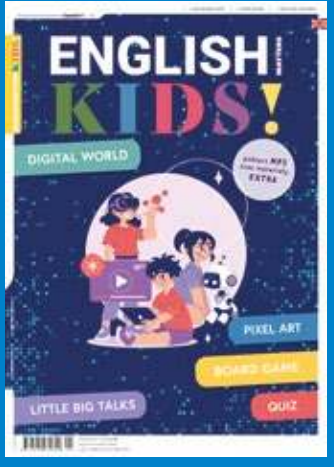
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