

## PHRASES TO EXPRESS ABILITY AND EDUCATION

---

### ABILITY

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

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

**To find** + gerund + easy, difficult, hard.

*'She finds singing easy but dancing hard.'*

**To be a talented** + occupation.

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

**To have the right skillset** for something.

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

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

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

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

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

### EXAMS

**To pass/ to fail an exam.**

**To take an exam** – to 'do' an exam.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Revision** (noun).

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

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

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

## **SUBJECTS AND QUALIFICATIONS**

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

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

**Curriculum** – what you will learn from each subject.

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

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

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

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

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

## **MATRICULATION**

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

**Application** (noun).

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

**To enrol** – to ‘matriculate’ for a course.

**Enrolment** (noun).

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

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

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

## **OUT-OF-SCHOOL EDUCATION**

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

**Training** (noun).

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