

National stereotypes: truth or myth?

1 LISTENING & SPEAKING

- a You're going to listen to four people talking about the typical characteristics of people from their country (England, Ireland, Scotland, and the USA). Before you listen, with a partner try to predict what positive and negative characteristics the speakers might mention.
- b **2.1** Listen and try to match the speakers 1–4 with their nationality. Use their accent and what they say about people from their country to help you.
- | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| English | <input type="checkbox"/> | Scottish | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> | American | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- c Listen again. Write down at least one negative and two positive characteristics about each nationality. Does each person think they are typical or not? Why (not)?
- d **2.2** Now listen to two extracts from each speaker. Try to write in the missing words. What do you think they mean?
- 1 a We think that if we work hard we can _____ anything.
b I think I have _____ the typical optimism and drive.
- 2 a Historically there has always been a lot of _____.
b It's probably because of our _____ and our history.
- 3 a It's difficult to generalize about us as a people, especially as our big cities now have such a _____ population.
b Just think of our inability, or our _____, to learn foreign languages!
- 4 a There is also a negative _____ towards our neighbour.
b I feel that we tend to focus too much on the _____ done to us in the distant past.
- e In pairs or small groups, discuss the questions.
- 1 What do you think are the strengths of your nationality?
 - 2 What are the weaknesses?
 - 3 In what way would you say *you* are typical?

2 GRAMMAR adjectives as nouns

- a In many parts of the world there is a joke which is based on national stereotypes. With a partner, complete *Heaven* with five different nationalities. Then do the same for *Hell*. Compare your version of the joke with another pair.

Heaven

'Heaven is where the police are _____,
the cooks are _____,
the mechanics are _____,
the lovers are _____,
and everything is organized by the _____.'

Hell

'Hell is where the police are _____,
the cooks are _____,
the mechanics are _____,
the lovers are _____,
and everything is organized by the _____.'

- b Read the article *Do we see ourselves as we really are?* and answer the questions.
- 1 How was the research done?
 - 2 What does it tell us about national stereotypes?
- c Read the article again. Which nationality / nationalities...?
- 1 were friendlier than they thought
 - 2 were less extrovert than they thought
 - 3 were more hard-working than they thought
 - 4 knew themselves the best
 - 5 knew themselves the least
 - 6 thought they were calm and reasonable, but they weren't
- d After reading the article, do you think any of the strengths and weaknesses of your nationality you mentioned before (in 1e) may not be completely true?



Do we see ourselves as we really are?

A worldwide survey casts doubt on national stereotypes

The English are cold and reserved, Brazilians are lively and fun-loving, and the Japanese are shy and hardworking – these are examples of national stereotypes which are widely believed, not only by *other* nationalities but also by many people among the nationality themselves. But how much truth is there in such stereotypes? Two psychologists, Robert McCrae and Antonio Terracciano, have investigated the subject and the results of their research are surprising. They found that people from a particular country do share some general characteristics, but that these characteristics are often very different from the stereotype.

In the largest survey of its kind, a team of psychologists used personality tests to establish shared characteristics among 49 different nationalities around the world. They then interviewed thousands of people from these same groups and asked them to describe typical members of their own nationality. In most cases the stereotype (how nationalities saw themselves) was very different from the results of the personality tests (the reality).

For example, Italians and Russians thought of themselves as extrovert and sociable, but the personality tests showed them to be much more introvert than they imagined. The Spanish saw themselves as very extrovert, but also as rather lazy. In fact, the research showed them to be only averagely extrovert and much more conscientious than they thought. Brazilians were quite neurotic – the opposite of their own view of themselves. The Czechs and the Argentinians thought of themselves as bad-tempered and unfriendly, but they turned out to be among the friendliest of all nationalities. The English were the nationality whose own stereotype was the furthest from reality. While they saw themselves as reserved and closed, Dr McCrae's research showed them to be among the most extrovert and open-minded of the groups studied.

The only nationality group in the whole study where people saw themselves as they really are was the Poles – not especially extrovert, and slightly neurotic.

Dr McCrae and Dr Terracciano hope that their research will show that national stereotypes are inaccurate and unhelpful and that this might improve international understanding – we're all much more alike than we think we are!



e Right or wrong? Correct the sentences which are *grammatically* wrong.

- 1 English talk about the weather a lot. ✗ *The English*
- 2 English people often travel abroad.
- 3 The Spanishs enjoy eating out.
- 4 Chinese and Japanese have a different cuisine.
- 5 I know an Italian who doesn't like spaghetti.
- 6 My sister married a Polish.

f **p.134 Grammar Bank 2A.** Read the rules for adjectives as nouns, and do exercise a.

g In pairs, say if you agree or disagree with the sentences below.

The British are usually less friendly than the Americans.

The Italians dress better than any other nationality.

The rich are always meaner than the poor.

The elderly are best looked after in residential homes.

The unemployed should not receive state benefits.



Small towns are better places to live than big ones.

It's better to buy expensive clothes if you can afford to, because they last longer than cheap ones.

3 READING

- a Look at the photos on page 23. Do you think the people are typically English in the way they dress? Who do you think is dressed in the most eccentric way?
- b You are going to read an article about how the English dress. Before you read the first part, discuss with a partner whether you think the following statements are true or false. Write T or F in the box.
- 1 The English dress badly.
 - 2 The English make very good suits.
 - 3 English people need rules to dress well.
 - 4 Punks and Goths wear a kind of uniform.
 - 5 The English person with the best fashion sense is the Queen.
 - 6 Young people around the world copy 'street fashion' invented by the English.
 - 7 The English don't like people who dress 'differently'.
- c Now read the first part of the text and find out if the writer agrees with your answers.
- d Look at the photo below. What 'tribe' of young people does he belong to? Read the second part of the text and find out why the anthropologist spoke to this person and what she discovered.
- e Look at the **highlighted** adjectives and work out the meaning from the context. Check with your dictionary or the teacher.
- f Choose the best summary of the article. From what you know of English people, do you think it is true?
- A The English often dress badly because they are insecure about what to wear. However, they often have a sense of humour about it.
 - B The English are a nation of individuals, who each dress in a rather eccentric way. The Queen and the Goths are good examples of this.
 - C The English love wearing uniforms and the more outrageous they are, the better.

4 VOCABULARY clothes and fashion

- a Look at the photos on page 23 again. What are the people wearing?
- b  **p.148 Vocabulary Bank** *Clothes and fashion.*
- c  **Communication** *Clothes quiz A p.116 B p.119.*



Watching the English: how the English dress

Kate Fox, an anthropologist, spent twelve years researching various aspects of English culture in order to try to discover the 'defining characteristics of Englishness'. The following is an extract from her book *Watching the English*.

THE ENGLISH have a difficult and, generally speaking, dysfunctional relationship with clothes. Their main problem is that they have a desperate need for rules, and are unable to cope without them. This helps to explain why they have an international reputation for dressing in general very badly, but with specific areas of excellence, such as high-class men's suits, ceremonial costume, and innovative street fashion. In other words, we English dress best when we are 'in uniform'.

You may be surprised that I am including 'innovative street fashion' in the category of uniform. Surely the parrot-haired punks or the Victorian vampire Goths are being original, not following rules? It's true that they all look different and eccentric, but in fact they all look eccentric in exactly the same way. They are wearing a uniform. The only truly eccentric dresser in this country is the Queen, who pays no attention to fashion and continues to wear what she likes, a kind of 1950s fashion, with no regard for anyone else's opinion. However, it is true that the styles invented by young English people are much more outrageous than any other nation's street fashion, and are often imitated by young people all over the world. We may not be individually eccentric, apart from the Queen, but we have a sort of collective eccentricity, and we appreciate originality in dress even if we do not individually have it.

N OTHER AREAS OF RESEARCH another 'rule' of behaviour I had discovered was that it is very important for the English not to take themselves *too* seriously, to be able to laugh at themselves. However, it is well known that most teenagers tend to take themselves a bit too seriously. Would a 'tribe' of young people be able to laugh at the way they dress? I decided to find out, and went straight to a group whose identity is very closely linked to the way they dress, the Goths.

The Goths, in their macabre black costumes, certainly look as if they are taking themselves seriously. But when I got into conversation with them, I discovered to my surprise that they too had a sense of humour. I was chatting at a bus stop to a Goth who was in the full vampire costume – with a white face, deep purple lipstick, and spiky black hair. I saw that he was also wearing a T-shirt with 'Goth' printed on it in large letters. 'Why are you wearing that?' I asked. 'It's in case you don't realize that I'm a Goth,' he answered, pretending to be serious. We both looked at his highly conspicuous clothes, and burst out laughing.









From *Watching the English* by Kate Fox



5 PRONUNCIATION vowel sounds

English vowel sounds are either short, long, or diphthongs (a combination of two short sounds).

- a Look at the sound pictures below. Which are short sounds, which are long, and which are diphthongs?

- b **2.3** Put two words in each column. Listen and check.

collar fur high-heeled loose Lycra™ plain put on sandals linen
sleeveless shirt slippers striped suede suit woollen

- c Practise saying the phrases.

a loose linen suit blue suede shoes a pale grey suede jacket
pink silk slippers a sleeveless white T-shirt a tight Lycra™ skirt

- d  **p.159 Sound Bank.** Look at the typical spellings for these sounds.

6 SPEAKING

GET IT RIGHT wear and dress

Circle the right word.

- The English don't *wear / dress* very stylishly.
- The Goths *wear / dress* a lot of black clothes.

Talk in small groups.

How your nationality dresses

- Do people in your country have a reputation for dressing well or badly?
- Do you think women pay more attention to their appearance than men, or vice versa?
- Are people generally very fashion conscious?
- What is in fashion at the moment for men and women?
- What are the current 'tribes' of young people? What do they wear?
- Do you like the way they dress?
- Are there any celebrities in your country who dress in a very eccentric way?
- What do you think of them?
- Do people tend to judge others by the way they dress?
- Do *you* think you dress like a typical person from your country? Why (not)?



7 GRAMMAR adjective order

- a Use your instinct. Complete each sentence with the **bold** words in the right order.

- The Goth in the photo has _____.
 - For the wedding I'm wearing a _____.
 - I want to buy a _____.
 - I'm looking for a _____.
- hair black spiky**
suit linen beige
bag black big leather
vest running nylon white

- b  **p.134 Grammar Bank 2A.** Read the rules for adjective order and do exercise b.

- c Imagine you were given two items of clothing for your birthday which you don't like. You have decided to sell them on eBay™. Write a detailed description, making them sound as attractive as possible.
- d Now tell other students about your two items. Try to find someone who wants to buy them and agree a price.

8 **2.4** SONG 🎵 *Englishman in New York*

2A adjectives as nouns, adjective order

nationalities

- 1 **The English** are famous for drinking tea. **The Dutch** make wonderful cheeses. **The Chinese** invented paper.
- 2 **The Argentinians** invented the tango. **The Greeks** are very extrovert.
- 3 **The Turks** drink a lot of coffee. **The Poles** play a lot of basketball.

- 1 You can use *the* with the nationality adjectives which end in *-sh*, *-ch*, *-ss*, or *-ese*. Don't add *s* to these words, or use them without *the*.
- 2 Nationality words which end in *-an* and a few others, e.g. *Greek* and *Thai*, are both adjectives and nouns. To talk about the people from that country use a plural noun ending in *-s*.
- 3 Some nationalities have a special noun for the people which is different from the adjective, e.g. *Polish* = adjective, *Pole* = noun. To talk about the people you can either use *the* + adjective or *the* + plural noun, e.g. *the Polish* or *the Poles*.

⚠ With any nationality, you can also use the adjective + *people*, e.g. *French people*.

⚠ To talk about one person from a country you can't use *a* / *an* + adjective alone:

- 1 *a Japanese man / woman / person, an Englishman / Englishwoman / English person*, NOT *a Japanese, an English*, etc.
- 2 *an Italian, a Greek*, etc.
- 3 *a Turk, a Pole*, etc.

specific groups of people

The poor are getting poorer and **the rich** are getting richer. The government needs to create more jobs for **the unemployed**.

- You can use *the* + some adjectives to talk about specific groups in society, e.g. *the young, the blind, the homeless, the old, the elderly, the sick*. These expressions are always plural.

one, ones

A Which one would you like? **B The red one**, please. Two ice creams, please. **Big ones**.

- When we don't want to repeat a noun after an adjective because it is already clear what we are talking about, we use the adjective + *one* (singular) or + *ones* (plural).

adjective order

We've got a **lovely old cottage** just outside Bath. She has **long fair hair**. I bought a **beautiful Italian leather belt**.

- You can put more than one adjective before a noun (often two and occasionally three). These adjectives go in a particular order, e.g. NOT ~~*an old lovely cottage*~~.
- Opinion adjectives, e.g. *beautiful, nice, lovely*, usually go before fact adjectives, e.g. *big, old, round*.
- If there is more than one fact adjective, they go in this order:

size	age	shape / style	colour / pattern	nationality	material	noun
<i>big</i>	<i>new</i>	<i>long</i>	<i>pink, striped</i>	<i>Italian</i>	<i>silk</i>	<i>scarf</i>

2B narrative tenses: past simple, past continuous, past perfect, past perfect continuous

narrative tenses

- 1 We **arrived** at the airport and **checked in**.
- 2 We **were having dinner** when the plane hit some turbulence.
- 3 When we arrived at the airport, we suddenly realized that **we had left** one of the suitcases in the taxi.
- 4 **We'd been flying** for about two hours when the captain told us to fasten our seat belts because we were flying into some very bad weather.

- 1 Use the **past simple** to talk about consecutive actions in the past, i.e. for the main events in a story.
- 2 Use the **past continuous** (*was / were* + verb + *-ing*) to describe a longer continuous past action, which was in progress when another action happened.
- 3 Use the **past perfect** (*had* + past participle) to talk about the 'earlier past', i.e. things which happened before the main event(s).
- 4 Use the **past perfect continuous** (*had been* + verb + *-ing*) to talk about a longer continuous action that was going on before the main events happened. Non-action verbs are not normally used in the past continuous or the past perfect continuous.

past perfect simple or continuous?

She was crying because **she'd been reading** a very sad book. She didn't want to see the film, because **she'd read the book**.

The past perfect continuous emphasizes the continuation of an activity. The past perfect simple emphasizes the completion of an activity.

2C adverbs and adverbial phrases

- 1 I don't understand you when you speak **quickly**. The driver was **seriously** injured.
- 2 I **never** have breakfast. He's **always** late.
- 3 They'll be here **soon**. It rained **all day yesterday**.
- 4 I've **nearly** finished. We're **incredibly** tired. He works **a lot**.
- 5 **Unfortunately**, we arrived half an hour late. **Ideally**, we should leave at 10.00.

- Adverbs can describe an action (*he walked slowly*) or modify adjectives or other adverbs (*it's incredibly expensive, he works very hard*). They can either be one word (*often*) or a phrase (*once a week*).

- 1 **Adverbs of manner** (how somebody does something) usually go after the verb or phrase. However, with passive verbs they usually go in mid-position (before the main verb but after an auxiliary verb).

- 2 **Adverbs of frequency** go before the main verb but after the verb *to be*.

⚠ *sometimes / usually / normally* can go at the beginning of a sentence too.

- 3 **Adverbs of time** usually go at the end of a sentence or clause.

- 4 **Adverbs of degree** (which describe how much something is done or to modify an adjective).

- *extremely, incredibly, very*, etc. are used with adjectives and adverbs and go before them.
- *much* and *a lot* are often used with verbs and go after the verb or verb phrase.
- *a little / a bit* can be used with adjectives or verbs, e.g. *I'm a bit tired. She sleeps a bit in the afternoon*.

- 5 **Comment adverbs** (which give the speaker's opinion) usually go at the beginning of a sentence or clause. Other common comment adjectives are *luckily, clearly, obviously, apparently*, etc.

⚠ Most other adverbs go in mid-position, e.g. *I just need ten more minutes. She didn't even say goodbye*.

2A

a Rewrite the underlined phrase using *the* + an adjective.

The people who live in Spain go to bed very late. *the Spanish*

- The people from the Netherlands are very good at languages.
- The people who had injuries were taken to hospital.
- The system of reading for people who can't see is called Braille.
- The people from France enjoy eating good food.
- A nurse's job is to look after the people who aren't well.
- I think the people from Switzerland are very punctual.
- The worst season for people without a home is winter.
- There is a discount for students and people without a job.

b Write the adjectives in brackets in the right place.

a big car park (empty) *a big empty car park*

- an attractive man (young)
- dirty shoes (old)
- a leather jacket (purple / stylish)
- a tall woman (thin)
- a sandy beach (long)
- a new floor (lovely / wooden)
- a smart suit (Italian)
- beautiful eyes (big / dark)
- an old dog (black / friendly)

2B

a Put the verb in brackets in the past perfect simple (*had done*) or continuous (*had been doing*). If you think both are possible, use the continuous form.

His English was very good. He 'd been learning it for five years. (learn)

- My feet were aching. We _____ for hours. (queue)
- She went to the police, because someone _____ her bag. (steal)
- The streets were wet. It _____ all morning. (rain).
- She got to work late because she _____ an accident on the way. (have)
- I almost didn't recognize him. He _____ a lot since I last saw him. (change)
- They were very red. They _____ all morning but they _____ any sun cream. (sunbathe, not put on)
- I could see from their faces that my parents _____. (argue)
- Jess had a bandage on her arm. She _____ off her bike the day before. (fall)

b Circle the correct verb form.

Meg and Liam McGowan (got) / *were getting* a nasty surprise when they ¹*had checked in* / *were checking in* at Heathrow airport yesterday with their baby Shaun. They ²*had won* / *won* three free plane tickets to Rome in a competition and they ³*were looking forward to* / *had been looking forward to* their trip for months. But, unfortunately, they ⁴*had been forgetting* / *had forgotten* to get a passport for their son and so Shaun couldn't fly. Luckily they ⁵*had arrived* / *were arriving* very early for their flight so they still had time to do something about it. They ⁶*had run* / *ran* to the police station in the airport to apply for an emergency passport. Meg ⁷*was going* / *went* with Shaun to the photo machine while Liam ⁸*had filled in* / *was filling in* the forms. The passport was ready in an hour, so they ⁹*hurried* / *were hurrying* back to check-in and finally ¹⁰*caught* / *had caught* their flight.

2C

a Underline the adverb(s) or adverbial phrase(s) and correct the sentences which are wrong.

We're going to be unfortunately late. ✗ *Unfortunately, we're going to be late.*

We rarely go to bed before 11.30. ✓

- She likes very much the theatre.
- Dave was late for work yesterday.
- Immediately the ambulance arrived.
- They go usually jogging after work.
- I was extremely tired last night.
- They won easily the match because they played brilliantly.
- I forgot your birthday almost.
- We luckily had taken an umbrella.
- She always eats healthily.
- He's been apparently sacked.

b Put the adverbs in brackets in the normal position in these sentences.

Sadly *very*
I don't speak ~~to~~ good English. (sadly, very)

- The building was damaged in the fire. (badly, last week)
- We need to do something. (obviously, quickly)
- Ben is at his friend's house. (often, in the evening)
- She walked out and she didn't say goodbye. (just, even)
- He drives fast. (always, extremely)
- She danced at the ballet. (beautifully, last night)
- She wasn't injured when she fell. (luckily, seriously)
- He broke his leg when he was skiing. (apparently, nearly)
- My father sleeps in the afternoon. (usually, a bit)