

# Language for ...

## sports

**Age:** Adult

**Level:** Intermediate

**Time:** 45–60 minutes

**Language focus:** Key vocabulary in starting a new sport (fitness, equipment, venue)

**Skills:** reading, speaking

**Materials:** copies of the worksheet

**Aims:** to provide students with the language needed to discuss a new sport with a colleague or sports trainer



### What are red words?

Ninety per cent of the time, speakers of English use just 7,500 words in speech and writing. These words appear in the Macmillan Dictionary in red and are graded with stars. One-star words are frequent, two-star words are more frequent and three-star words are the most frequent. 'Language for' lessons are based on red words and encourage students to improve their English through communicative tasks using collocation and commonly used phrases.

- 1 As preparation for the lesson, ask students to make a list of all the sports they know. Give them a few minutes to think about the words and discuss them in pairs or small groups. Then elicit examples from the class and write them on the board.



**Teaching Tip:** Students often use *play* with all sports when *do* or *go* are the correct collocations. Elicit from the class which of the sports in the list on the board people *do* (e.g. martial arts such as judo and karate) and which they *go* (activities ending in *-ing* such as running, swimming, cycling and skiing). Sports which involve a ball (or equivalent) are preceded by *play* (e.g. football, hockey, table tennis, basketball).

- 2 Make a copy of the worksheet for each student.

- 3 Start the lesson by asking students to work in pairs and ask and answer the three questions. Then get them to report their partner's answers to the whole class.
- 4 Point out that nouns formed from adjectives have different endings. Ask students to work individually and complete the second part of exercise 1. Have them compare their answers in pairs, and then check the answers with the whole class.
- 5 Tell students that they're going to read a text about advice for people planning to take up a new sport. Ask them to read the sentences in exercise 2a and choose the best word in each case. Ask them to compare their answers in pairs. Then ask them to read the text to check their answers. They should be able to find all the correct answers in context, but check briefly with the whole class that they all have all the correct answers.
- 6 Before they begin exercise 2b, ask students to work in pairs and predict what vocabulary items might go in the gaps. Listen to their ideas as a class but do not correct them at this stage. Then ask them to read the text again to check their answers.
- 7 Ask students to read the sentences in exercise 3a carefully and then work in pairs to complete the exercise. Encourage them to first complete any answers they immediately know so that they can be eliminated. Check the answers as a class.
- 8 Exercise 3b uses words first encountered in the previous exercises and in the text. Ask students to work individually to complete the exercise and then compare their answers in pairs. Check answers with the whole class.

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- 9** Exercise 3c focuses on some common verb-noun collocations in this context. This exercise can be done individually. Check answers with the whole class.
- 10** Divide students into pairs for exercise 4. Tell them to read the questions and each note down some ideas for the responses. Remind them to look back at the words and phrases featured in earlier exercises, as well as any suggestions given in exercise 4. Ask them to take turns in asking the friend's questions and responding to them.
- 11** Ask students to read the questions in exercise 5 and discuss them in pairs or small groups. They should report any interesting answers to the class.
- 12** As a wind-up activity, ask students to rank the four sports in the text in order of preference from 1 (the best) to 4 (the worst). Find out which sport is the most popular with the class.
- b**
- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1 locker     | 5 boots    |
| 2 court      | 6 racquets |
| 3 spectators | 7 partner  |
| 4 facilities | 8 injuries |
- c**
- |     |     |
|-----|-----|
| 1 d | 4 e |
| 2 f | 5 c |
| 3 b | 6 a |
- 4,5** students' own answers

### Answer key:

- 1**
- |          |            |
|----------|------------|
| 1 width  | 3 distance |
| 2 length | 4 activity |
- 2a**
- |             |                     |
|-------------|---------------------|
| 1 burn      | <b>b</b> 1 benefits |
| 2 kit       | 2 boots             |
| 3 pitch     | 3 efficient         |
| 4 spectator | 4 racquet           |
| 5 court     | 5 partner           |
| 6 pace      | 6 waterproof        |
| 7 injuries  | 7 muscles           |
| 8 strokes   | 8 lockers           |
- 3a**
- |     |     |
|-----|-----|
| 1 f | 5 g |
| 2 d | 6 e |
| 3 h | 7 b |
| 4 a | 8 c |

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### 1 Warmer

Ask and answer the following questions with a partner:

- How much exercise do you take each week?
- Which sport or sports do you play regularly?
- Which sports do you watch on TV?

Complete the table.

	Adjective	Noun
1	wide	_____
2	long	_____
3	distant	_____
4	active	_____



### 2 Reading and comprehension questions

#### TAKING UP A NEW SPORT

So you have decided to get fit. The question is how. Few people would dispute the fact that regular exercise is good for you and helps to keep you active in both mind and body. But what kind of exercise? Which sports will bring the greatest benefits? Which are easiest to participate in? Which sports require a lot of equipment, and which require very little? Which sports require a lot of practice, and which can be done without much preparation? Here we look at four popular sporting activities and examine their benefits in helping you to keep fit and stay fit.

**1 Football.** Football is the world's most popular sport and great fun to play. As far as keeping fit is concerned, it is not one of the most efficient, however, unless you play it professionally! In a typical football match, you will only burn around 400 calories per hour.

Another disadvantage is that you will obviously need to be part of a team, as football is a team game. So, you will need to join a football club and also buy a complete football kit (shirt, shorts, socks) and a pair of football boots, which can be quite expensive. You will also have to pay for the hire of a football pitch for matches, either an outdoor pitch for 11-a-side matches or an indoor pitch in a sports centre for 5-a-side games.

**Tip - Playing 5-a-side football will help you to develop your football skills more quickly.**



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**2 Tennis.** Tennis is a popular spectator sport with tournaments such as the US Open and Wimbledon attracting millions of television viewers. If you play actively yourself, it can help you to get fit and then to keep fit, but, just like football, it is not the most efficient way of burning calories, as it will only burn around 400 calories an hour. If you intend to take up tennis, you will need to buy some tennis kit (shirt and shorts or skirt) and a more expensive item – a tennis racquet. To arrange a game of tennis, you will obviously need to find a playing partner (or partners for a

game of doubles) and then hire a tennis court. You may also need to join a tennis club, as some towns and cities do not have many tennis courts for public use.

**Tip – As is the case with all racquet sports, your tennis will improve more rapidly if you take lessons from a tennis coach.**

**3 Running.** Running (or jogging if you prefer a slower pace) has one great advantage over the other sports listed here. You don't need a special place for this sport. You can begin outside your front door! The number of calories burnt per hour when running will vary depending on your weight and also on the pace that you run at, but it is normally around 500 calories per hour. As far as equipment is concerned, you won't need much: a T-shirt and shorts in summer and a windproof and/or waterproof jacket in winter. You will also need to invest in a pair of running shoes and it is important to get a good pair as cheap running shoes can cause injuries.



**Tip – Go running with a friend. If you can't talk, you are running too fast!**

**4 Swimming.** Many people argue that swimming is the ideal exercise because it works different sets of muscles and there is no risk of injury from repeated contact with the ground. Perhaps surprisingly, swimming can also



burn more calories than the other activities in the article, but this depends very much on which swimming stroke you use. Swimming typically burns between 400 and 700 calories per hour. Breaststroke and freestyle burn more than backstroke, but the most intensive exercise of all is the butterfly stroke. You will need to buy a suitable swimming costume and also to pay for the use of a swimming pool and facilities such as changing-rooms, showers and lockers to store your clothes.

**Tip – If you are new to swimming for exercise, start by swimming widths of the pool rather than lengths.**

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**a Choose the correct word. Then read the text and check your answers.**

- 1 You **burn** / **use** different amounts of calories in different sports.
- 2 If you want to play football, you will need to buy some football **dress** / **kit**.
- 3 Your team will also need to hire a football **place** / **pitch**.
- 4 Tennis is a popular **spectator** / **viewer** sport.
- 5 You will need to hire a tennis **court** / **pitch**.
- 6 Some people run at a faster **rate** / **pace** than others.
- 7 Cheap running shoes can cause **injuries** / **wounds**.
- 8 There are four main swimming **styles** / **strokes**.

**b Fill in the missing information.**

- 1 You need to decide which sports will bring the greatest \_\_\_\_\_ in terms of fitness.
- 2 You will need to buy a complete football kit and a pair of football \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 Tennis and football are not the most \_\_\_\_\_ way of burning calories.
- 4 If you play tennis, your \_\_\_\_\_ is the most expensive piece of equipment.
- 5 For a game of tennis, you obviously need a playing \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6 If you run in wet weather, you will need a \_\_\_\_\_ jacket.
- 7 Swimming works different sets of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 Swimming pools have showers and \_\_\_\_\_ for you to store your clothes.

**3 Language in use****a Read the sentences. Look at the words in bold and match them with their meanings a-h.**

- 1 In a typical football match, you will only burn 400 **calories** per hour.
- 2 Sports **kit** can be quite expensive.
- 3 If you are planning to **take up** tennis, you will need to buy a racquet.
- 4 You will need to **hire** a tennis court.
- 5 The number of calories you burn will depend on the **pace** you run at.
- 6 Some people argue that swimming is the **ideal** exercise.
- 7 Swimming pools have **facilities** such as changing rooms and showers.
- 8 You can leave your clothes in a **locker** while you swim.

- a pay to use something for a short time
- b a place or equipment provided for people to use
- c a cupboard that you store things in for a short time
- d clothes needed for a sport
- e perfect
- f units for measuring how much energy you get from food
- g the speed at which something happens
- h start doing an activity

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**b** Complete the information on this notice using the words in the box.

injuries    spectators    racquets    boots    court    partner    locker    facilities

### INFORMATION FOR SPORTS CENTRE USERS

- 1 Take a shower before using the swimming pool and keep your clothes and other belongings in a \_\_\_\_\_ (1).
- 2 You must wear suitable tennis shoes on the tennis \_\_\_\_\_ (2).
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ (3) must remain in the viewing area.
- 4 Only sports centre members may use the \_\_\_\_\_ (4) provided.
- 5 Football \_\_\_\_\_ (5) may not be worn in the changing rooms.
- 6 Tennis \_\_\_\_\_ (6) may be hired at Reception.
- 7 If you need a \_\_\_\_\_ (7) for a game of tennis, sign the list at Reception.
- 8 Report any \_\_\_\_\_ (8) to Reception immediately.

**c** Match the verbs in the left-hand column with the nouns and noun phrases in the right-hand column to make phrases from the text.

- |           |                  |
|-----------|------------------|
| 1 burn    | a a partner      |
| 2 work    | b a new sport    |
| 3 take up | c a sports club  |
| 4 hire    | d calories       |
| 5 join    | e a tennis court |
| 6 find    | f muscles        |

## 4 Communicate

A friend is thinking of taking up a new sport. Answer her / his questions.

Friend: I need to lose some weight. Which sport do you think is the best?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

Friend: Will I need to buy any equipment?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

Friend: What about sports kit?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

Friend: Where can I do this sport?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

Friend: Can I do it alone?

You: \_\_\_\_\_



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### 5 Discussion

Ask and answer the following questions with a partner:

- What sports are popular in your country?
- Which sports would you like to take up and why?
- Have you ever suffered an injury while playing sports?

### Red Words

Words highlighted in red in this worksheet are Red Words in the Macmillan Dictionary.