

A Dedication

إهداء

إلى كل من هو قريب إلى القلب.

To all who are close to the heart.

إلى كل من هو عزيز على النفس.

To all who are dear to the soul.

إلى ابنتي إيمان، وابني مصطفى، وابنتي أماني.

To my daughter Eman, my son Moustafa and my daughter Amany.

I dedicate this book.

أهدي هذا الكتاب

والله ولي التوفيق

The Author

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Preface

COMMON MISTAKES

Here are just a few examples of common mistakes أخطاء شائعة made by students of English as a foreign language in the UK:

One and a half

- **Wrong:** "I've been in Scotland for one and a half month"
(or "one month half")
- **Right:** "I've been in Scotland for one and a half months"

One and a half is more than one, so the noun (month) must be plural جمع ("months"). It is better not to split numbers: "one and a half months", not "one month and a half"

The UK

- **Wrong:** "I like UK very much"
- **Right:** "I like the UK very much"

"UK" is short for "United Kingdom"; "kingdom" is a noun, so it needs أداة معرفة an article (eg: "a" or "the") - there is only one United Kingdom, so it must be "the United Kingdom".

Almost all

- **Wrong:** "Almost of the people in my class are Japanese"
- **Right:** "Almost all of the people in my class are Japanese"
or "Nearly all of the people in my class are Japanese" or
"Almost everybody in my class is Japanese"

The sentence "Most of the people in my class are Japanese" is correct. But when you want to stress تأكيد that there are very few people from other countries in your class, you must say "Almost all of the people in my class are Japanese".

English

- **Wrong:** Saying that someone from Wales, Scotland or Ireland is “English”
- **Right:** You can call someone from Wales “Welsh” or “British”. You can call someone from Scotland “Scottish” or “British”. You can call someone from Ireland “Irish” (or “Northern Irish” if the person is from Northern Ireland)

You need to know something about the history of the United Kingdom to understand why this mistake annoys people. For details, see: Britain/Countries.

Scary

You are frightened **خائف** about something.

- **Wrong:** “I’m scary”
- **Right:** “I’m scared”

If you say “I’m scary” it means that you make other people afraid of you (like a monster **وحش** or a ghost **شبح**).

Agreeing with negative statements

Your friend says: “I don’t like my teacher”

- **Wrong reply:** “Me too”
- **Right reply:** “Me neither” (or “I don’t like mine either”)

If a person makes a negative statement - where the main verb **الفعل الرئيسي** is made negative using “not” - and you agree **توافق مع** with what has been said, you should say “Me neither”.

Your friend says: “I dislike my teacher”

- **Wrong reply:** “Me neither”
- **Right reply:** “Me too” (or “I dislike mine too”)

Even though the statement in this second example expresses the same idea **تعبّر عن نفس الفكرة** as in the first example, the main verb has not been made negative using “not”.

Answering negative questions

You don't like your teacher. Your friend asks you: "Don't you like your teacher?"

- **Wrong reply:** "Yes"
- **Right reply:** "No" or "No, I don't"

If someone asks you a question in which the main verb has been made negative using "not", you should answer "no" if you agree with the statement form of the question (in this case the statement form of the question is "You do not like your teacher"). To avoid من سوء تفاهم تتجنب any possible misunderstanding من الأفضل to repeat the negative verb or to answer using a full sentence ("No, I don't" or "No, I don't like my teacher")

You don't like your teacher. Your friend asks you: "You don't like your teacher, do you?"

- **Wrong reply:** "Yes"
- **Right reply:** "No" or "No, I don't"

The main verb is still "do not like". The "do you?" at the end is just a way of turning the statement "You don't like your teacher" into a question.

You like your teacher. Your friend asks you: "Don't you like your teacher?"

- Wrong reply: "No", or just "Yes"
- Right reply: "Yes - I like her"

The person asking a negative question is expecting you متوقع منك to agree by saying "no", so if you want to disagree لا توافق (because you like your teacher) you need to stress تأكد your answer. In this case في هذه الحالة it is done by stressing the word "yes", and to make your meaning clear you should say a full sentence.

You like your teacher. Your friend asks you: “You don’t like your teacher, do you?”

- **Wrong reply:** “No”, or just “Yes”

- **Right reply:** “Oh yes I do”

“Oh yes I do” is a way of disagreeing with a question that ends “do you?” (similarly, if someone says, “You aren’t hungry, are you?” and you feel hungry, you can answer “Oh yes I am”).

One word or two?

Some words are made by combining two short words which each have only one sound (monosyllables). It is a common mistake to write these using two words instead of as one. بدلاً من

- **Wrong:** bed room, bath room, good night, on line

- **Right:** bedroom, bathroom, goodnight, online

Very

You cannot use “very” together with an adjective صفة which already بالفعل has the idea فكرة of being “very” something. Examples of these kinds of adjectives are: “delicious” means “very tasty لذيذ جداً”, enormous means “very big كبير جداً”, “lovely” means “very nice لطيف جداً”, “great” means “very good”.

- **Wrong:** “British food is very delicious”

- **Right:** “British food is delicious”

Next

Explaining dates التواريخ in the future, for example when arranging ترتيب to meet someone, can be confusing مربك. For example, if today is Monday and you say you will meet someone “next Friday” what does it mean? It would be clearer to say “this Friday” or “Friday this week” for the nearer date, or “Friday next week” or “the Friday after next” for the later date. British people find it confusing مربك too - so don't worry about asking them to make it clear what they mean. Another common mistake is:

- **Wrong:** “I'll see you next week”
- **Right:** “I'll see you the week after next”