

Unit 1

What Is It?

Learning Objectives

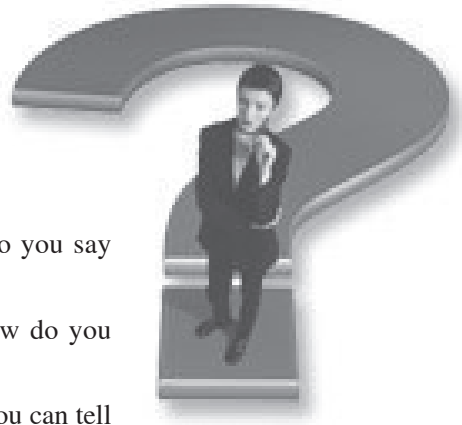
- To learn to ask about objects by their shapes, sizes, textures and uses;
- To learn to describe objects in terms of their shapes, sizes, textures and uses;
- To learn to describe products in terms of appearances, functions and selling points.

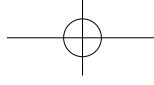
Warming-up



1 Questions for Thought

- Do you ever forget the name of an object? What do you say then?
- Have you ever been asked to describe objects? How do you help another person understand what you mean?
- What questions can you ask about an object so that you can tell what it is?





2 Look at the Following Pictures

Find the right word from the list to fill in the blank below under each picture.



A



B



C



D



E



F



G



H



I



J

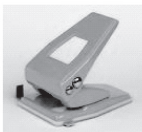


K

- 1) star 2) square 3) sphere or ball 4) pyramid 5) oval 6) cylindrical
7) diamond 8) triangular 9) rectangular 10) cube 11) round

3 Identify the Objects

What are the names of these objects? Match the names with the objects, and write the name below each object.



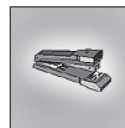
A



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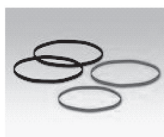
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M



N

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1) highlighters | 2) post-it notes | 3) socket | 4) scissors |
| 5) envelope | 6) cable | 7) stapler | 8) desk tidy (pen/pencil holder) |
| 9) cell phone | 10) switch | 11) rubber bands | 12) paperclip |
| 13) hole punch | 14) light bulb | | |

4 First Attempt

Work in pairs. You're going on a holiday and would like to buy a suitcase, but you don't know how to say "suitcase" in English. You ask your friend Jerry for help. Your dialog may start like this:

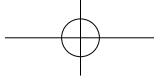
You: Excuse me, Jerry. I'm going on holiday next week. I want to buy something.

Jerry: What do you want to buy?

You: You know, I can't say it in English.

Jerry: What does it look like? Maybe I can help you.

(Now listen to the model conversation and compare your dialog with it.)



Activities



TASK 1 DESCRIBING EVERYDAY OBJECTS

When you forget the name of an object, the only way you can get help from others is by describing what it looks like in terms of its shape, size, materials, features, and uses. The questions you may need to answer are:

- What does it look like?
- What size is it?
- What is its shape?
- What is it made of?
- What qualities does it have?
- What can you do with it? (What does it do?)



Listening

Listen to the speakers talking about different objects and fill in the blanks with the information given.

	Object	Shape	Size	Material	Functions
1			<i>Small</i>		
2				<i>Straw</i>	
3	<i>Disc</i>				
4				<i>Wool or cotton</i>	
5		<i>Rectangular, one or two doors</i>			
6			<i>Quite small</i>		
7	<i>Ruler</i>				



TIPS

一般物品的描述可以从形状、大小、材质、特征及用途等方面进行。

Do It Yourself

Work in pairs and make up dialogs for the following situations given.

- 1) You want to buy one of the objects listed in Warming-up Exercise 3 but don't know how to say it in English. The salesperson asks you some questions about it and you describe it.
- 2) You've lost your cell phone. The last time you used it was at the train station. You go to the Lost and Found Department of the station. The clerk asks you what it looks like and you describe it.
- 3) You've just bought a computer and are describing it to your classmate with the help of these words—liquid crystal, frame, a computer case and jack.



TASK 2 DESCRIBING PRODUCTS

Listening

When describing products, you need to tell what they are like, what functions they have, and most important of all, what the selling points are. Now listen to a salesperson presenting a product to some buyers. Fill in the missing words and phrases in the following sentences and check the answers with a classmate of yours. Then both of you summarize the selling points of this product.

TIPS

在介绍产品时，要描述产品的外形、制作材料和功能，同时别忘了说明该产品的卖点。



- 1) As you can see, it's _____ and _____.
- 2) The tower _____ wood.
- 3) Let me _____ its dimensions.
- 4) It _____ in three colors.
- 5) It's _____ for storing CDs and CD-ROMS.
- 6) It has several _____ which should appeal to our customers.
- 7) It really does _____ of music lovers.

Do It Yourself

Work in groups of four students. You all work as salespersons for a chain store which sells a range of stylish and innovative products, like the ones below. Now each of you chooses one product from the following that you'd like to represent. Discuss and decide which product is the most exciting and innovative.



Outdoor Heater

- Heats the air outside a building
- Powered by propane gas
- Easy to regulate the heat
- Can be used in all weathers
- Easy to clean
- Attractive design
- Price: \$299



Personal Satellite Navigation System

- Pocket-sized
- Download any world city map from your computer
- No need to carry a street map ever again
- Slim, lightweight
- Price: \$320

Juice Extractor

- Extracts juice from fruit and vegetables, easy to pour
- Powerful motor
- Safety locking lid
- All parts easy to remove and can be washed in a dishwasher
- Stainless steel filter
- 10-year motor guarantee, 3-year parts and labor guarantee
- Free recipe book
- Price: \$48



Body Weight Monitor

- Measures how much body fat you have
- An LCD display shows changes in your weight
- Easy-to-read graphs and charts
- Holds health and weight records for up to 5 years
- Price: \$45

TASK 3 DESCRIBING A PLACE

When you describe a place, you commonly use the structure “there is/there are” + noun(s) + prepositional phrases starting with “at”, “on”, “under”, “below”, “above”, “near”, “opposite”, “on the right”, “on the left”, etc. You can, of course, use other structures as well.

TIPS

描述地点时，常用 there be 句型，特别要注意正确使用表示方位的介词。描述性文字中有时抒发一下情感也是很有必要的。

For Example

Look at the following picture of a room. Study the accompanying description of this room and pay special attention to the prepositions used.



I'm very lucky that I've got my own room at home. In my room there is a bed, a desk, a chair, a wardrobe and a television. The wardrobe is on the left and my bed is on the right. The desk is under the window, between the wardrobe and the bed. There is a computer on the desk and you can see books, pens and CDs near the computer. There is a magazine and a camera on the bed. Opposite the bed is the television. I always watch TV when I am in bed.

Do It Yourself

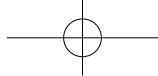
Work in pairs.

- 1) Describe your bedroom or your house to your classmate following the example given.
- 2) Describe one of the landmarks in your hometown, such as the Bird's Nest in Beijing, the Oriental Pearl TV Tower in Shanghai, the Dayan Pogoda in Xi'an, or other famous places.



TASK 4 SITUATIONAL DIALOG

Work in pairs. Talk about one of your favorite possessions with your classmate. It should include how you got it, what it looks like, what useful features it has, what the object says about you, and how you like it.



Review

Useful Words and Expressions

<input type="radio"/> Questions to ask about objects	What does it look like? What size is it? What shape is it? What is it made of? What qualities does it have? What can you do with it? What is it used for?
<input type="radio"/> Describing objects	It's made of leather/wood/steel/ aluminum/plastics. It weighs 2.4 kilos. It comes in a wide range of colors.
<input type="radio"/> Talking about the uses	It's ideal for traveling. It's designed to be used with any type of material. It's used to cut/for cutting paper.