

TECHNICAL ENGLISH – 6°

Reading comprehension

UNIT 10

The Easiest Way to Live Longer

What about you?

This unit's reading is entitled 'The Easiest Way to Live Longer'. Which of the following do you think is the easiest way to live longer? Put a tick (✓) next to your answer.

- 1 Go to the doctor for regular check-ups. ☐
- 2 Wear a seat belt in a car. ☐
- 3 Do not eat too much red meat, fried foods and sweets. ☐
- 4 Take vitamin pills every day. ☐
- 5 Exercise for fifteen minutes every day. ☐

Before you read

¹to be thrown clear: to be thrown far away from the car

²trap people in cars: make it impossible for people to get out of cars

³30 miles per hour = 48 kilometres per hour

You are going to read an article about seat belts. The statements below are from the article. Put a **T** if you think the statement is true. Put an **F** if you think the statement is false.

- 1 It's best to be thrown clear¹ of a serious accident. ☐
- 2 Seat belts trap people in cars² that are burning or sinking in water. ☐
- 3 Seat belts aren't needed at speeds of less than 30 mph³. ☐

Read the text

Read the article. Find out if the statements above are true or false.

Maybe ten-year-old Elizabeth said it best when she said to her father, 'But, Dad, you can't be healthy if you're dead.'

- 5 Dad, in a hurry to get home before dark so he could go for a run, had forgotten to buckle his seat belt – a mistake *three-quarters* of the US population make every day. The big question is *why*.

- 10 There have been many myths about seat belts ever since their first appearance in cars some twenty years ago. The following are three of the most common.

¹traveled/traveling (American English); travelled/travelling (British English)

The Easiest Way To Live Longer

by PORTER SHIMER

- 20 **Myth Number One: It's best to be 'thrown clear' of a serious accident.**

- 25 **TRUTH:** Sorry, but any accident serious enough to 'throw you clear' is also going to be serious enough to give you a very bad landing. And chances are you'll have traveled¹ through a windshield or door to do it. Studies show that chances of dying after a car accident are 30 twenty-five times greater in cases where people are 'thrown clear.'

Myth Number Two: Seat belts 'trap' people in cars that are burning or sinking in water.

- 35 **TRUTH:** Sorry again, but studies show that people knocked unconscious due to *not* wearing seat belts have a greater chance of dying in accidents involving submersion or fire. People 40 wearing seat belts are usually protected to the point of having sufficient awareness to free themselves from such emergencies, not to be trapped in them.

Myth Number Three: Seat belts aren't needed at speeds of less than 30 mph.

- 50 **TRUTH:** In a head-on collision between two cars traveling¹ at 30 mph, an unbelted driver would meet the windshield and dashboard with a force equal to diving headfirst into a sidewalk from three stories up. The body 55 is given exactly a hundredth of a second to stop.

Check your understanding



1 Match the words in Column A with the correct picture. Write the correct letter in each box.

COLUMN A

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 landing (line 25) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 head-on collision (line 50) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 windshield [Am Eng] (lines 27 and 53) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 dashboard (line 54) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 knocked unconscious (lines 34-35) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 diving (line 55) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 submersion (line 40) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8 sidewalk [Am Eng] (line 55) | <input type="checkbox"/> |



2 Fill in the chart with information from the article.

	SEAT BELT ON	SEAT BELT OFF
Percentage of US population	1 _____ %	_____ %
In a serious accident	2 You will not be _____ 3 Your body will not move from the seat. 4 You will probably not _____ 5 Chances of dying in such an accident are much less.	You may be thrown clear of the car. Your body will probably go through _____. You will probably get hurt from a bad landing. Chances of dying in such an accident are _____.
If a car catches on fire or falls in water	6 You will not be knocked unconscious. 7 You will be able to _____.	You may be _____. You will not be able to get out of the car.
In a head-on collision at 30 mph	8 Your body will not move from the seat.	You may hit the _____. 9 Your body has only _____. 10 This would be the same as _____ from the third floor of a building.

What about you?



- 1 Is there a law requiring people to wear seat belts in your country?
- 2 Do you wear a seat belt a) in the front of the car b) in the back c) neither?
- 3 Will you start wearing one now?
- 4 Do you think wearing a seat belt is something people should decide for themselves?

Vocabulary focus



windshield (American English) – windscreen (British English)
sidewalk (American English) – pavement (British English)

1 Unscramble the words in brackets and fill in the blanks with the correct word in British English.

- 1 In the US people use an *eraser* when they've made a mistake in pencil.
In the UK they use a _____. (beurrb)
 - 2 In the US people use an *elevator* when they do not want to walk up stairs.
In the UK they use a _____. (filt)
 - 3 In the US a person who does not like to spend money is called *cheap*.
In the UK this person is called _____. (anem)
 - 4 In the US people put *gas* in their cars.
In the UK they put in _____. (tolrep)
 - 5 In the US children like to eat *candy*, which is bad for their teeth.
In the UK children like to eat _____. (ewstes)
 - 6 American children also like to eat *cookies*.
British children like to eat _____. (stibucis)
 - 7 American men wear *pants*.
British men wear _____. (surotsre)
 - 8 Americans wear *bathing suits* when they go swimming.
The British wear _____. (migsimwn tessomuc)
 - 9 In the US *smart* students do well in school.
In the UK these students are called _____. (levrec)
- 2 Can you think of any more examples of differences in British and American English?

Eckstut, S. & Lubelska, D., "Widely Read", Longman, 1989

GRAMMAR AWARENESS

Find in the text examples of:

- Present Simple
- Present Continuous
- Past Simple
- Present Perfect
- "Going to" future
- Simple Future
- Comparatives and superlatives
- If clauses