

English

# THE **BUSY DAY** DOMINOES



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*Verbs are an essential part of all languages. Learning what verbs to use and how to conjugate them is an important and often difficult step forward for your students. ELI has devised a simple yet highly effective game in order to make this phase easier and more enjoyable for both you and your class.*

*Use **The Busy Day Dominoes** as part of your English language class and help your students to learn the various verb forms and tenses naturally.*

## ABOUT THE BUSY DAY DOMINOES

**The Busy Day Dominoes** is based on the traditional game of dominoes. There are 48 cards in the game, each one with a colourfully illustrated action on the left side and a phrase describing an action on the right. All verbs in the phrases are left in the infinitive form. Play starts with the card showing the alarm clock and the phrase *The alarm clock (to ring)*. Your students must match the phrase with the correct illustration and piece together a typical day in the life of the Johnson family. By leaving the verb in its infinitive form you can decide which tense to use thereby allowing you to use the game with classes at different stages and levels.

### Verb List

1. to ring - rang - rung
2. to wake up- woke up - woken up
3. to get up - got up - got up
4. to comb - combed - combed
5. to shave- shaved - shaved
6. to brush - brushed - brushed
7. to get dressed - got dressed - got dressed

8. to wash - washed - washed
9. to take (for a walk) - took - taken
10. to make (a meal) - made - made
11. to have (a meal) - had - had
12. to eat - ate - eaten
13. to drink - drank - drunk
14. to open - opened - opened
15. to go out - went out - gone out
16. to stand - stood - stood
17. to get on - got on - got on
18. to walk - walked - walked
19. to drive - drove - driven
20. to park - parked - parked
21. to wave goodbye - waved goodbye - waved goodbye
22. to go into - went into - gone into
23. to work - worked - worked
24. to get off - got off - got off
25. to go (home) - went - gone
26. to listen to - listened to - listened to
27. to watch - watched - watched
28. to do - did - done
29. to wait - waited - waited
30. to get (petrol) - got - got
31. to jog - jogged - jogged
32. to play (music) - played - played
33. to play (sport) - played - played
34. to play (with a toy) - played - played
35. to cook - cooked - cooked
36. to set - set - set
37. to talk - talked - talked
38. to laugh - laughed - laughed
39. to feed - fed - fed
40. to close - closed - closed
41. to have (a bath) - had - had
42. to write - wrote - written
43. to make (a telephone call) - made - made
44. to get undressed - got undressed - got undressed
45. to read - read - read
46. to switch off - switched off - switched off
47. to sleep - slept - slept

You will notice that some verbs are repeated. Use this as an opportunity to teach the class the different ways verbs such as *have*, *get*, *make*, *do*, and *take* can be used. Point out that *play* can be used for musical instruments, sports, games and toys. For more advanced classes use **The Busy Day Dominoes** as an opportunity to introduce phrasal and prepositional verbs.

## HOW TO PLAY

Play **The Busy Day Dominoes** with your friends or as part of your English lesson. The flexible structure of **The Busy Day Dominoes** makes it suitable for both introducing and revising verb forms and tenses.

Choose the tense you wish to use and start play by either giving a short introduction to the class:

*It's Monday morning, what are the Johnsons doing?*

or by writing *NOW* or *TODAY* on the board.

Now place the alarm clock card on the table and say:

*It's seven o'clock. The alarm clock is ringing.*

Alternatively practise the present simple by writing

*A typical day for the Johnsons* on the board or by

saying: *What do the Johnsons do every day?*

*At seven o'clock the alarm clock rings.*

Similarly the past simple can be introduced by writing

*YESTERDAY* on the board or by saying:

*What did the Johnsons do yesterday?*

*At seven o'clock the alarm clock rang...*

You can adapt the game to use any tense you wish to revise or introduce.

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Here are some ideas for teaching activities. Adapt them to suit the level and mood of your class.

## DOMINOES

Shuffle the cards and give an equal number to each player. The player with the *alarm clock card* begins play by placing it in the centre of the table and saying the phrase aloud in the chosen tense. The player on the right continues play. The first player with the card containing either the illustration of the alarm clock or the phrase *The alarm clock (to ring)* continues. Each time a player adds a card to the game s/he must say his/her sentence or the matching sentence aloud in the correct tense.

When playing **The Busy Day Dominoes** as part of an English language class the teacher acts as a judge, deciding whether each phrase has been conjugated and pronounced correctly. Award one point for each correct phrase.

When playing **The Busy Day Dominoes** at home one of the players acts as a judge, using if necessary the table on pages 2 and 3. Award one point for each correctly conjugated and pronounced phrase.

If a player makes a mistake s/he must take a domino card from each of the other players.

The first player to get rid of all of his/her domino cards is the winner.

## CAN YOU REMEMBER WHO?

Ask the class to form two teams. Place all the cards face up on a table and give the class a few minutes to study them carefully. Now cover the cards and ask questions such as the following:

*Who is brushing his/her teeth?*

*Who is having breakfast?*

*Who is drinking orange juice?*

*Who is playing tennis? etc.*

Get your students to write their answers on a sheet of

paper. Award 1 point if they guess the correct person but make a language (spelling, syntax) mistake and 2 points if both the person and the sentence are correct. The team with the most points is the winner.

## IF...

The object of the game is to form conditional sentences.

Before starting hold up the 'alarm clock' and the 'waking up' cards. Make a sentence using either the 1st, 2nd or 3rd conditional:

- 1. If the alarm clock rings the Johnsons will wake up.*
- 2. If the alarm clock rang the Johnsons would wake up.*
- 3. If the alarm clock had rung the Johnsons would have woken up.*

Now hold up another two cards and get the students to write a sentence using the chosen conditional tense. (If you wish form teams as above and award points for correct answers.)

Here is an example for the 3rd conditional:

Mrs Johnson making breakfast and Jimmy eating toast.  
*If Mrs Johnson had made breakfast Jimmy would have eaten some toast.*

### **Variation**

Get your class to use their imaginations by suggesting some highly improbable situations:

*What will happen if Mr Johnson takes the computer for a walk?*

*What would happen if Jimmy drove to school?*

*What would have happened if Janet had drunk 20 glasses of orange juice?*

Get them to work either individually or in small groups to write down the consequences of the unlikely actions.

Vote for the funniest/silliest/most sensible suggestions.

## WHEN...

Introduce or revise adverbs of time. Now place a number of cards on the table and get your students to sequence them using adverbs of time. (Write the adverbs you wish to use on the board, if necessary.)

*The alarm clock rings early.*

*The Johnsons get up immediately.*

*After that they have some breakfast.*

*Then Mr Johnson takes the dog for a walk.*

*Eventually they go out of the house.*

## COPYCATS

Hold up one illustration at a time and describe it out loud. Get your students to repeat your sentence if it is correct.

For example show Janet getting dressed and say:

*Janet is getting undressed. (incorrect)*

*Janet is getting dressed. (correct)*

You may vary the game by choosing a time frame and getting your students to repeat your sentences when you use the correct tense.

For example write *Yesterday* on the board and show Janet getting dressed then say:

*Janet will get dressed. (incorrect)*

*Janet got dressed. (correct)*

## CHARADES

Get the class to form pairs. Put the cards face down on a table and ask one pair to choose 4 or 5 cards and put them into sequence. They mime their sequence (illustrations or phrases) in front of the class. The other pairs write down what is happening and then say the sequence aloud.

The first pair to guess correctly chooses another 4 cards from the table and mimes the sequence.  
The pair with the most cards at the end of the game is the winner.

### **Variation**

Ask a volunteer to choose a card from the pack. S/he mimes the action (illustration or phrase) on his/her card and the others guess.

If you wish get them to mime both the illustrations and the phrases in the above examples.

*These suggestions are intended as a starting point.  
Have fun developing your own games and activities to suit your own class' specific needs. And above all enjoy using **The Busy Day Dominoes!***