

LEVEL
A2 · Elementary

TIME
60 min

SKILLS
Reading · Speaking · Grammar · Vocabulary

Learning objectives

In this lesson, you can:

- understand official rules about working hours
- use *have to / don't have to / can / can't*
- talk about jobs and working conditions
- give your opinion about long working weeks

Key vocabulary

average · employer · employee · law · opt out · overtime · limit · record · exception · advice

Materials

- this worksheet
- web page: *Maximum weekly working hours* (GOV.UK)

1 Warm up

SPEAKING

Look at the pictures. What can you see? How are they connected to the topic? Then answer the questions with your teacher.



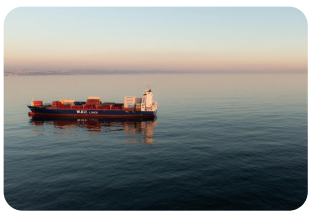
PICTURE A · working late



PICTURE B · a clock



PICTURE C · a hospital worker



PICTURE D · a ship

1. How many hours do you work a day?
2. What time do you start and finish work?
3. Which jobs have very long hours?

 · © NATeacher. Photocopiable for use in NATeacher lessons.

2 Vocabulary preparation

VOCABULARY

Part A: Match the words with the definitions.

employer (n) | law (n) | overtime (n) | average (n) | employee (n) | opt out (v)

1. _____ the normal number when you add numbers and divide them
2. _____ the company or person you work for
3. _____ a person who works for a company
4. _____ a rule from the government
5. _____ to choose not to be part of something
6. _____ extra hours of work after your normal hours

Part B: Jobs. Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

police officer | nurse | cleaner | sailor | manager | security guard

1. A _____ works in a hospital.
2. A _____ works on a ship.
3. A _____ protects a building at night.
4. A _____ helps people when there is a crime.
5. A _____ makes decisions and leads a team.
6. A _____ cleans offices.

3 Main input: read and learn

READING · GRAMMAR

In the UK, there is a law about the maximum number of hours people can work. Read the official government page (the "Overview").

READING

Maximum weekly working hours
GOV.UK (UK government) · official guide · Overview page (about 2 minutes) · free
https://www.gov.uk/maximum-weekly-working-hours

Read the first part. Answer: What is the maximum number of hours a week on average? Can workers choose to work more?

STUDENT'S WORKSHEET

 · © NATeacher. Photocopiable for use in NATeacher lessons.

Language focus: *have to / don't have to / can / can't*

We use these words to talk about rules at work.

Meaning	Example
It is necessary: have to / has to	Your employer has to keep some records about working hours.
It is not necessary: don't have to / doesn't have to	You don't have to opt out. It's your choice.
It is allowed: can	You can choose to work more.
It is not allowed: can't	If you're under 18, you can't work more than 8 hours a day.

Careful: *don't have to* (not necessary) is very different from *can't* (not allowed). Questions: *Do you have to...? / Does she have to...?*

Practice: Complete the sentences with *can, can't, has to* or *have to*.

1. Normally, you _____ work more than 48 hours a week on average.
2. Your employer _____ keep some records about your working hours.
3. You _____ work more than 48 hours if you opt out.
4. If you're under 18, you _____ work more than 40 hours a week.
5. Do you _____ wear a uniform at work?

4 Reading comprehension

READING

Part A: Read again. Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)? Circle.

1. The normal limit is 48 hours a week on average. T / F
2. The average is normally calculated over 17 weeks. T / F
3. Workers can't choose to work more than 48 hours. T / F
4. Workers under 18 can work 10 hours a day. T / F
5. Police officers may have to work more than 48 hours. T / F
6. Employers don't have to keep any records. T / F

 · © NATeacher. Photocopiable for use in NATeacher lessons.

Part B: Who may have to work more than 48 hours a week? Write ✓ or ×.

Job	✓ / ×
a police officer	
a seafarer (a person who works at sea)	
a security guard	
a managing executive who controls his or her own decisions	
a shop assistant	

Part C: Think and answer.

1. Where can workers get advice about working hours?

2. Why do you think there is a limit of 48 hours?

3. Write two sentences about your job. Use *I have to... / I don't have to...*

STUDENT'S WORKSHEET

 · © NATeacher. Photocopiable for use in NATeacher lessons.

5 Speaking practice and discussion

SPEAKING

Part A: Choose TWO cue cards. Talk about each card with your teacher for 1–2 minutes.

Cue card 1: My working week

- How many hours?
- Busy days
- Free time

Cue card 2: Overtime

- Do I do overtime?
- Is it paid?
- Why?

Cue card 3: Work-life balance

- Family time
- Sport and hobbies
- Holidays

Cue card 4: Rules at my company

- Things I have to do
- Things I can't do
- A rule I like

Cue card 5: My ideal job

- Hours
- Place
- Salary and benefits

Part B: Answer the questions with your teacher. Give reasons and examples.

1. How many hours do you work a week? Is it too much? Why?
2. What do you have to do at work every day?
3. What don't you have to do in your job, but you like to do?
4. Is a 48-hour limit a good idea for your country? Why? / Why not?
5. What can companies do to help employees with long hours?

6 Lesson takeaway and wrap-up

REVIEW

Complete the sentences. Then tell your teacher.

1. Three new words from today: _____
2. One rule from the UK law: _____
3. In my job, I have to _____ , but I don't have to _____ .
4. One thing my company can do for a better work-life balance: _____

Takeaway: In the UK, most people can't work more than 48 hours a week on average, unless they choose to. Know the rules in your country — and your limits.

 · © NATeacher. Photocopiable for use in NATeacher lessons.

+ Optional extension / homework

WRITING

Write 50–70 words with the title "Rules in my job". Use: *I have to… / I don't have to… / I can… / I can't…*

Alternative activity:

Make a list of five rules for a healthy working week in your team (for example: "We can't send emails after 8 p.m."). Present it to your teacher in the next class.

References

GOV.UK. (n.d.). *Maximum weekly working hours*. https://www.gov.uk/maximum-weekly-working-hours

Original materials: vocabulary, language examples and exercises were written for NATeacher for A2 learners.

Photos: Vitaly Gariev, Christian Velitchkov, Ocean Ng, JESHOOTS.COM, Gary Walker-Jones on Unsplash (unsplash.com), used under the Unsplash License.

STUDENT'S WORKSHEET

 · © NATeacher. Photocopiable for use in NATeacher lessons.