

「Pocket English Grammar — for intermediate learners —」 Collins COBUILD, 2012 年刊を読む

Main points

- You use impersonal 'it' as the subject of a sentence to introduce new information.
- You use 'it' to talk about the time or the date.
- You use 'it' to talk about the weather.
- You use 'it' to express opinions about places, situations, and events.
- 'it' is often used with the passive of reporting verbs to express general beliefs and opinions.

1. (1) 'it' is a pronoun. As a personal pronoun it refers back to something that has already been mentioned.

① *They learn to speak English before they learn to read it.*

② *Maybe he changed his mind, but I doubt it.*

(2) You can also use 'it' as the subject of a sentence when it does not refer back to anything that has already been mentioned. This impersonal use of 'it' introduces new information, and is used particularly to talk about times, dates, the weather, and personal opinions.

2. (1) You use impersonal 'it' with a form of 'be' to talk about the time or the date.

① *It is nearly one o'clock.*

② *It's the sixth of April today.*

3. (1) You use impersonal 'it' with verbs which refer to the weather.

drizzle hail pour rain sleet snow thunder

① *It's still rajning.*

② *It snowed steadily through the night.*

③ *It was pouring with rain.*

(2) You can describe the weather by using 'it' followed by 'be' and an adjective with or without a noun.

① *It's a lovely day.*

② *It was very bright.*

(3) You can describe a change in the weather by using 'it' followed by 'get' and an adjective.

① *It was getting cold.*

② *It's getting dark.*

4. (1) You use impersonal 'it' followed by a form of 'be' and an adjective or noun phrase, to express your opinion about a place, a situation, or an event. The adjective or noun phrase can be followed by an adverbial or by an '-ing' clause, a 'to' -infinitive clause, or a 'that'-clause.

① It was terribly cold in the trucks.

② It's fun working for him.

③ It was a pleasure to be there.

④ It's strange that it hasn't been noticed before.

5. (1) You use 'it' followed by a verb such as 'interest', 'please', 'surprise', or 'upset' which indicates someone's reaction to a fact, situation, or event. The verb is followed by a noun phrase, and a 'that'-clause or a 'to' -infinitive clause.

① It pleases me that he wants to talk about his work.

② It surprised him to realize that he hadn't thought about them until now.

[コメント]

辞書で有名なコリンズ社による英文法のポケット版教科書。ここに引用させて頂いた形式主語 It の用法についての英語による説明をどうか何十回も音読して、ぜひ本書を購入し、親しんで英文法を自分のものとして身に付けて頂きたい。日本の高校生用の教科書と参考書を横に置きながら本書を 6 ～ 10 回学習すれば、TOEIC にも TOEFL にも対応可能と考える。

なお、本書には CEFR B₁-B₂, Recommended for speakers of English at B₁ and B₂ of the Common European Framework of References (CEFR) 「ヨーロッパ共通参照枠」 B₁-B₂、中級者用の表示がある。親切この上ない。

— 2013 年 4 月 23 日 林 明夫記 —