76 *it* as a subject/object

It snowed all night and it took a long time to clear the roads in the morning.

1 *it* as a subject

We can use *it* as a subject pronoun, to talk about a noun we have already mentioned:

There was an awful ***storm*** *last night.* ***It*** *damaged the roof.*

But often *it* has no real meaning, e.g. ***It's*** *raining.* We use *it* + *be*

- with an adjective, to describe a general situation: *I love living in Cambridge.* ***It's*** *nice here.*
- to talk about time: *What time is* ***it?*** ***It's*** *ten o'clock. What time will* ***it*** *be when we arrive?*
- to talk about days and dates: *What day is* ***it?*** ***It's*** *Monday.* ***It*** *was my birthday yesterday.*
- to describe distances: ***It's*** *five kilometres from home to the station.* ***It's*** *200 kilometres away.*
- to talk about the weather: ***It's*** *raining.* ***It*** *isn't cold.*

We say *it takes five minutes, two hours,* etc. when we talk about how long we need to do something:

'How long ***does it take*** *to get to the airport?' '****It takes*** *about an hour.'*

It took *a long time to clear the roads in the morning.*

2 *it* as an object

We also use *it* as an object pronoun to talk about a noun we have already mentioned:

There was a lot of ***snow*** *yesterday. The children enjoyed playing in* ***it.***

3 *it's* + adjective/noun + *to*

We often use an adjective or noun after *be* + infinitive with *to*:

It + *be*	ADJECTIVE	INFINITIVE
It's	*nice*	*to see you.*
It isn't	*easy*	*to find our house.*

It + *be*	NOUN	INFINITIVE
It was	*a mistake*	*to accept this job.*
It will be	*a shame*	*to miss your wedding.*

4 *there* and *it*

We use *there* + *be* to give new information. We use *it* to say more about that information.

There's ***somebody*** *at the door.* ***It's*** *the postman.*

There's ***some soup*** *on the cooker.* ***It's*** *tomato soup.*

⚠ We don't use *it* to say where something is or when something happened. We use *there*:

✗ ~~*It's a swimming pool at the leisure centre.*~~ ✓ ***There's*** *a swimming pool at the leisure centre.*

✗ ~~*It was a lot of snow last night.*~~ ✓ ***There was*** *a lot of snow last night.*

there + *be* ➤ Unit 75