

86 Introductory "it"

"It" is often used when a sentence has no clear subject, and is sometimes known as a dummy subject or empty subject.

See also:

Defining relative clauses **81**

Non-defining relative clauses **82**

86.1 "IT" AS A DUMMY SUBJECT

"It" is used to talk about the time, dates, distance, or the weather. In these sentences, "it" doesn't have a specific meaning, but it serves as the grammatical subject of the sentence.

"It" can be used to talk about the time.

What time is **it**?

It's 3 o'clock.



"It" can be used to talk about distances.

How far is **it** to the beach?

It's 1 mile that way.



"It" can be used to talk about the day, date, month, or year.

What day is **it**?

It's Tuesday.



"It" can be used to talk about the weather.

What's the weather like today?

It's cloudy and raining.



FURTHER EXAMPLES

It's 2 o'clock in the morning.
Please stop singing!



I'm going to walk to work.
It's only two miles away.



It's the 21st century. I can't believe you still use that phone.



I'm surprised that **it's** so sunny in the middle of January.



