

A visit to Ikea...

Today, let's talk about Ikea. It's a place many of us like to visit when we want something for the home. Whether it's a new kitchen, a new sofa, or some new bedroom furniture, Ikea sells it. They also sell many other things, like curtains, bedding, and household furniture. In fact, you name it and you'll probably find it in Ikea.

The Swedish store has had a phenomenal success rate in Europe. Founded by Ingvar Kamprad in 1943 the store has transformed home furnishings. It has allowed people to have Swedish furnishings. One in ten Europeans now has an Ikea bed. Ikea's catalogue is the world's most distributed publication, surpassing the bible. The store's success has made Mr Kamprad into one of the world's richest men.

Ikea has expanded a lot. Today, it has 287 stores in 26 countries. It has opened new stores in Russia, China, Poland, Italy, Switzerland and the US, creating 4,000 new jobs. It is considering expanding its business in India. The company already has stores in France, Slovakia, Australia, and Spain. Ikea recently celebrated its 25th anniversary in the UK. It opened its first store there in 1987 in a retail park just outside Warrington in Cheshire. Today, there are 18 outlets across the UK.

Whilst we may like the joy of Ikea furnishings there is however, the pain that goes with them of putting the flat-pack furniture together! At times it is painfully infuriating trying to assemble it all! Many a swear word has been uttered in the quest of screwing the nut another quarter turn in some practically unreachable position.

Navigating oneself around an Ikea store is an art. The one way system is cleverly designed to get you to see everything. Ikea offer us goods with strange Swedish names no one has ever heard of (Ringskär, Hjuvik, Elverdam are taps!). There is the joy of trying to locate a shelf or flat-pack bit of furniture in the massive storeroom. Many people who visit Ikea stores are lured by their restaurant, which is pretty good. The queues say it all. Their meatballs, cranberry sauce and boiled potatoes are highly popular.

Group President Mikael Ohlsson: "Today, when nations and people face economic challenges, Ikea is more relevant than ever".

Category: Lifestyle / Ikea / Shopping
Level: Intermediate / Upper Intermediate

A visit to Ikea...

Add five things you might buy in Ikea for the following rooms in your house/flat etc...

Living room / Dining room

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Study

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Kitchen

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Utility / washroom / store

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Main bedroom

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Children's bedroom

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Bathroom

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Your choice of room

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

EXERCISES

1. Ikea: Think of three things you might buy in Ikea. Go round the room swapping details with others.

2. Dictation: The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. Reading: The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. Vocabulary: Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

5. The article: Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) Discuss the article.

6. Ikea: Think of five things you know about Ikea from the article. Then add five other things you know about the Swedish store. Write them below. Discuss together. What are your conclusions?

From the article	Your own ideas
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

7. Let's roleplay 1: In pairs/groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Discussion FM* radio studio in London. Today's interview is about: *Ikea – expanding into your region. 10 minutes.*

1	Ingvar Kamprad	3	A journalist
2	Group President	4	A customer

The teacher will choose some pairs to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

8. Let's roleplay 2: In pairs. You are in an Ikea restaurant. Start a conversation about 'Ikea'. *5-minutes.*

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9. Let's think! In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with **Ikea**. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

10. Let's roleplay 3: In pairs. You are in the kitchen department in Ikea. You wish to buy a new kitchen and some kitchen utensils. You wish to design it in store. One of you is an Ikea salesperson. The other is a customer. The salesperson can explain all the hidden extras you need to consider i.e. possible rewiring, re-plumbing etc... Roleplay the situation. *5-minutes*.

11. A visit to Ikea: In pairs. One of you is a visitor to your city/town. You want to visit Ikea. The other gives them directions on how to get there. Consider the different options i.e. using a car or going on the bus there. *5-minutes*.

12. Let's do 'The Article Quiz': Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A

- 1) Name the store.
- 2) How many stores are there around the world?
- 3) Name the founder.
- 4) How many new jobs has Ikea created recently?
- 5) Who is the Ikea group president?

Student B

- 1) What are highly popular?
- 2) Name the taps!
- 3) What has Ikea been celebrating in the UK recently?
- 4) Name three countries in which Ikea has stores.
- 5) What surpasses the bible?

13. Economic: Think of five advantages and disadvantages of Ikea opening one of its stores near you. Write them below. Discuss together. What are your conclusions?

Advantages	Disadvantages
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

14. Let's write an e-mail: Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: **Ikea**. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

15. Sentence starters: Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) Ikea _____
- b) The Swedish store _____
- c) I like _____

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Have you ever visited an Ikea store? Explain.
- 3) What do you like about Ikea?
- 4) What do you dislike about Ikea?
- 5) How do you normally get to Ikea?
- 6) Which is your favourite department in Ikea?
- 7) Are the Ikea store assistants helpful?
- 8) Why is Ikea so successful?
- 9) Is Ikea planning to open a store near you?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) Name three things you bought in Ikea.
- 3) What are the alternatives to Ikea?
- 4) What is the quality of Ikea food like?
- 5) Have you experienced pleasure in constructing one of their products?
- 6) Just why are Ikea products such a pain to put together?
- 7) Would you like to work for Ikea? Explain.
- 8) Do you have an Ikea bed or any of their bedroom furniture?
- 9) What do you think of the Ikea restaurant and food area?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

SPEAKING

Let's play a game: A visit to Ikea...

Allow 10 minutes – As a class / small groups – in a circle in a clockwise direction...

I went to Ikea and I bought ...

Repeat the previous things mentioned then add one more...

Forget one and you are eliminated!

The teacher can moderate the session.

GAP FILL: READING: edited

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

A visit to Ikea...

Today, let's talk about Ikea. It's a place many of us like to visit when we want something for the (1)____. Whether it's a new kitchen, a new (2)____, or some new bedroom (3)____, Ikea sells it. They also sell many other things, like (4)____, bedding, and household furniture. In fact, you name it and you'll probably find it in Ikea.

The Swedish store has had a (5)____ success rate in Europe. Founded by Ingvar Kamprad in 1943 the store has transformed home furnishings. It has allowed people to have Swedish furnishings. One in ten Europeans now has an Ikea bed. Ikea's (6)____ is the world's most distributed (7)____, surpassing the bible. The stores success has made Mr Kamprad into one of the world's richest men.

Ikea has expanded a lot. Today, it has 287 stores in 26 countries. It has opened new (1)____ in Russia, China, Poland, Italy, Switzerland and the US, creating 4,000 new jobs. It is considering expanding its business in India. The company already has stores in France, Slovakia, Australia, and Spain. Ikea recently celebrated its 25th anniversary in the UK. It opened its first store there in 1987 in a retail park just outside Warrington in Cheshire. Today, there are 18 (2)____ across the UK.

Whilst we may like the joy of Ikea furnishings there is however, the (3)____ that goes with them of putting the (4)____ furniture together! At times it is painfully infuriating trying to (5)____ it all! Many a (6)____ has been uttered in the quest of screwing the (7)____ another quarter turn in some practically unreachable (8)_____.

curtains

home

publication

catalogue

furniture

phenomenal

sofa

position

stores

swear word

assemble

nut

flat-pack

outlets

pain

GAP FILL: LISTENING:

Listen and fill in the spaces.

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SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings:

Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20

1	phenomenal	11	practically
2	countries	12	massive
3	business	13	furniture
4	flat-pack	14	potatoes
5	infuriating	15	kitchen
6	assemble	16	sofa
7	swear word	17	challenges
8	uttered	18	relevant
9	publication	19	unreachable
10	whether	20	catalogue

LINKS

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/retailandconsumer/9575911/I-t-looks-so-easy-at-first....html>

<http://www.ikea.com/>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ikeauk>

www.newsflashenglish.com

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