

UNIT 12 B

READING

Where does the time go?

Chart 1 How we spend our lives

Graph 1
Time spent at work (hours per week)

Year	Time spent at work (hours per week)
1900	65
1925	50
1950	40
1975	35
2000	32
2015	30

Graph 2
Time spent on housework (hours per week)

Year	Men (hours per week)	Women (hours per week)
1965	10	30
1975	10	25
1985	10	20
1995	10	15
2005	10	10
2015	10	5

We have more free time than ever before. In many countries, the average working week is now under 40 hours, far shorter than it was for our parents and grandparents before us. So why do our lives feel so busy, and where does our time go?

People sleep for about eight hours a day, which means we spend 26 years in our beds, in an average lifetime of 78 years. We spend another eleven years watching TV and, depending on where you live, two years of that can be spent just watching the commercials!

In a typical lifetime, we spend around 91,000 hours at work, which is nearly ten and a half years. And do you drive to work? If so, you can say goodbye to at least another year of your life – even more if you work in a big city like Istanbul or Rio de Janeiro and have to sit in traffic jams every day.

In many countries, the law requires young people to stay in school until they're at least 16 years old. Many go on to higher education at a university or college. That means we spend, on average, 31,000 hours – roughly three and a half years of our lives – studying.

Two and a half years of our lives are spent in the bathroom, brushing our teeth, using the toilet, taking a shower, and getting ready to go out. Shopping uses up another two and a half years, and we spend at least another four years eating.

The introduction of modern appliances, such as dishwashers, washing machines, and microwaves, means that, overall, we spend less time cooking and cleaning than our parents did. Women still do most of the housework, but men are sharing domestic tasks more than they used to.

In recent years, the biggest change in how we spend our time is technology. We spend an average of five years online and almost four years using our phones, and those numbers are increasing every year.

If you add up all that time, it leaves you with just over two years on average to spend with family and friends, to see the world, and to achieve your dreams. So, what are you waiting for? The clock is ticking!

B Choose the correct options to complete the information about Graphs 2 and 3.

- 1 We spend *more* / *less* time at work than in the past.
- 2 Over the last twenty years, there *has* / *hasn't* been a big change.
- 3 The total time spent on housework by men and women has *decreased* / *increased*.
- 4 Men do *more* / *less* housework now than in 1965.

Read the text and look at Chart 1 and Graphs 1 and 2. Check (✓) the best summary of the text.

- 1 We have a lot more time to spend with friends and family than in the past.
- 2 We worked more in the past, but we were happier.
- 3 We have very busy lives and not much time to do the important things.

Read the text and look at Chart 1 and Graphs 1 and 2 again. Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- 1 On average, people live to be 76 years old.
- 2 In 1900, people worked 60 hours a week.
- 3 We spend about a third of our lives sleeping.
- 4 We spend two and a half years in the shower.
- 5 People who work in big cities spend less than a year in their cars.
- 6 We spend a lot of free time using technology.