

GRAMMAR FOCUS

Using “as” and “like”

Do you know how to use like and as?

Test what you know with interactive exercises and read the explanation to help you.

Look at these examples to see how as and like are used.

I worked **as** an actor for two years.

I went home early **as** I felt ill.

He looks **as if** he hasn't slept.

As you know, this is the third time I've had to complain.

He **looks like** his dad.

She's **like** a sister to me.

Try to do something relaxing, **like reading** a book or having a bath.

Try this exercise to test your grammar.

Grammar Test 1 - B1-B2: 'as' and 'like'

1 Complete the sentences with 'as' or 'like':

- a) _____ you know, the factory will shut down in May.
- b) I'm looking for a job _____ a diving instructor.
- c) I was so tired. I slept _____ a baby.
- d) Study as hard _____ you can and I'm sure you'll pass your exams.
- e) He wants to be a nurse _____ he loves helping people.
- f) This song sounds _____ David Bowie.
- g) I made a mistake but I just continued _____ if nothing had happened.
- h) The music was playing _____ they walked into the church.

Read the explanation to learn more.

Grammar explanation

“as” and “like” are often confused since they can both be used for comparisons. There are, however, important differences.

Making comparisons

as + adjective + as and as much as

We often use the structure as + adjective + as or as much as to say if something has, or doesn't have, the same amount of that quality as something else.

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She loves curry **as much as** I do.

He's not **as tall as** his brother.

It's not **as expensive as** the other hotel.

That dog is **as big as** that child!

You also have to use **as** in the expression **the same as**.

Your phone is **the same as** mine.

Texting is not **the same as** speaking in person.

like + noun

In the following comparisons, like is followed by a noun or a pronoun to say that two things are similar.

He's **like a father** to me.

She's acting **like a child**.

It's **like a burger** but with big mushrooms instead of bread.

There are lots of **people like** us.

It is also common to make comparisons using **like with verbs of the senses**.

She **looks like** her mother.

It **sounds like** a cat.

Nothing **tastes like** homemade lemonade.

It **smells like** medicine.

It **feels like** cotton.

as if/as though + clause

As if and **as though** can be used to compare a real situation to an imaginary situation. They are followed by a clause (a subject and verb).

You look **as if you've seen** a ghost.

I felt **as if I was floating** above the ground.

You talk **as though we're never going to see** each other again.

Giving examples

We can say **like** or **such as** to give examples.

You could try a team sport **like football, basketball or hockey**.

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You should take something soft, **such as a towel**, to lie on.

Talking about a job or function

We can use **as + noun** to talk about a job or function.

I worked **as a shop assistant** for two years.

He used his coat **as a blanket** to keep warm.

as to connect two phrases

"as" can be used as a conjunction to connect two phrases. It can have different meanings.

as = 'because'

All the tickets were sold out **as we got there too late**.

As the road was closed, I had to park on the next street.

as = 'while' or 'during the time that'

She called **as I was getting out** of the bath.

As they were arriving, we were leaving.

as = 'in the way that'

As we expected, it started to rain.

As you know, classes restart on 15 January.

As I said, I think this project will be a challenge.

**** Note that in informal speech, people sometimes say like for 'in the way that'.**

Like I said, I didn't know her.

Do this exercise to test your grammar again.

Grammar Test 2 - B1-B2: 'as' and

2 Complete the sentences with 'as' or 'like':

- a) She worked _____ a journalist before writing her first novel.
- b) You look just _____ your mother when you smile.
- c) We've only just met, but I feel _____ though I've known you all my life.
- d) They said I didn't have _____ much experience as the other candidate.
- e) _____ we were late, we had to get an expensive taxi.
- f) I slept on the train, using my jacket _____ a pillow.
- g) Many fruit trees need insects _____ bees and butterflies to help them produce fruit.
- h) I like listening to music _____ I do the ironing.