

"24/7" 24 Hours a Day/7 Days a Week

Work schedules are changing all over the world

More and more companies around the world are operating twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Many of these companies do business with companies in other time zones around the world. Other companies sell products to customers worldwide. In an age of instant communication by telephone, by fax, and over the Internet, many businesses must stay open all the time to serve their customers. International banks, computer companies, manufacturing companies, and businesses that sell their products over the World Wide Web are examples of such companies.

Employees of these "24/7" companies have seen changes in their work schedules in recent years. About twenty percent of employees don't work on a traditional "9 to 5" daytime schedule anymore. Their companies have switched them to other shifts, such as 3:00 P.M. to 11:00 P.M., or 11:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. In the past, many factory workers, doctors and nurses, police, firefighters, and others had these shifts, but now many office workers have also started to work during these hours.

Many local businesses have adjusted their hours to serve the employees of these companies. More and more supermarkets are open 24 hours a day. Restaurants and coffee shops close later and open earlier. And businesses such as photocopy centers, health clubs, laundromats, and even some child-care centers are always open.

Describe the work schedules of people you know. Are there any "24/7" businesses in your area? What's your opinion about these businesses and their employees' work schedules?



A sign of the times



The night shift



A typical night at the office



A health club that's open 24 hours a day



A coffee shop that never closes

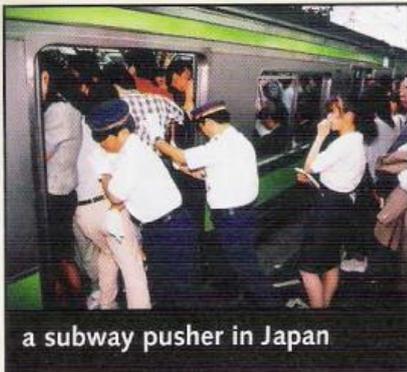


Late-night shopper at the supermarket

AROUND THE WORLD

Unique Jobs

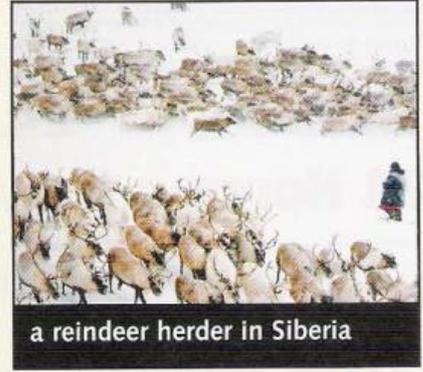
Some jobs are unique. They exist only in certain countries.



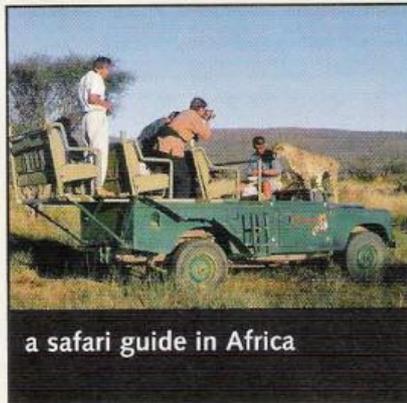
a subway pusher in Japan



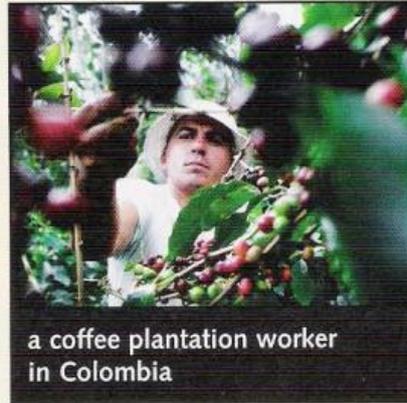
a tulip farmer in Holland



a reindeer herder in Siberia



a safari guide in Africa



a coffee plantation worker in Colombia



a dog day-care worker in California

What unique jobs do you know? In what countries do these jobs exist?

Interview

Mr. and Mrs. Roberto Souza have two children, ages two and four. Mr. Souza works the day shift at a manufacturing company, and Mrs. Souza works at night in an office. Their lives are certainly busy!



Q: Mr. Souza, can you describe your typical day?

A: I get up at 5:30 A.M. I take a shower, eat breakfast, and make my lunch. Sometimes I do some laundry before I go to work. I leave the house at 6:30 A.M.

Q: Is anyone in your house awake when you leave?

A: No. Everyone is still asleep. I work from 7:00 A.M. until 3:00 P.M. After work, I pick up my kids at their grandmother's apartment. Usually we go food shopping and then we go home to make dinner. My wife has already left for work. I play with the kids, we eat dinner, and then I put the kids to bed. I'm normally asleep by 10:00 P.M.

Q: And Mrs. Souza, what about your day?

A: The kids and I get up at 7:00. We eat breakfast, and then they play while I do some housework. Sometimes we go to the park or we visit family or friends. Other times we go shopping. I take the kids to my mother's apartment at 2:00 P.M., and I'm at work by 3:00 P.M. I come home at 11:30 P.M. That's my day!

Q: It sounds exhausting! When do you have time to see your husband?

A: Sometimes he waits for me to come home, but usually he has already gone to bed. Believe it or not, we really see each other only on the weekends.

Q: Mr. Souza, what's the most difficult thing about your work schedule?

A: Communication. We leave each other notes and messages about bills, shopping, doctor's appointments, and everything else.

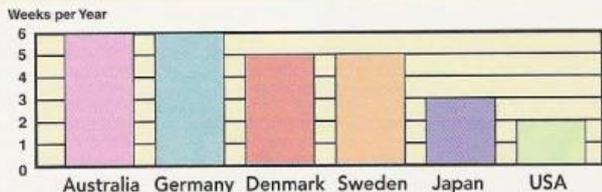
Q: And tell me, Mrs. Souza, is there anything good about these work schedules?

A: Yes. The children are always with a parent or a grandparent. They don't have to go to daycare, which is expensive. We know these schedules won't last forever. When the children are both in school, maybe we can each have a daytime job. I hope so!

FACT FILE

Vacation Time in Different Countries

Employees in different countries have different amounts of vacation time. What's the typical amount of vacation time employees receive in different countries you know? How do people usually spend their vacation time?



LISTENING

Hi Sam . . .

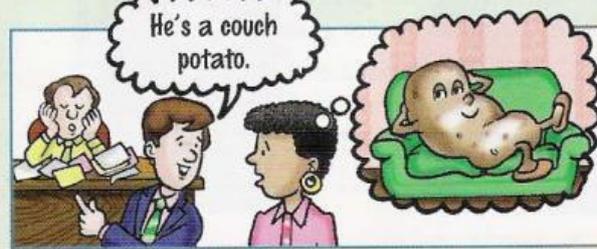


Office Voice Mail

Has Sam . . .

	Yes	No
1 written a note to Mrs. Wilson?	___	___
2 called Mr. Chen?	___	___
3 sent an e-mail about the meeting?	___	___
4 spoken to the custodian?	___	___
5 made a list of the employees?	___	___
6 given the list to Ms. Baxter?	___	___
7 taken the package to the post office?	___	___

FUN with IDIOMS



Do You Know These Expressions?

- | | | |
|-------|---|-----------------------|
| ___ d | 1. My new co-worker is a real peach. | a. He's funny. |
| ___ | 2. She's the top banana in our company. | b. He's afraid. |
| ___ | 3. He's a real ham at office parties. | c. She's intelligent. |
| ___ | 4. He's a couch potato. | d. He's nice. |
| ___ | 5. She's a smart cookie. | e. He's lazy. |
| ___ | 6. He wants to ask for a raise, but he's chicken. | f. She's the boss. |

We've Got Mail!

Dear Side by Side,

We are students in Mr. Smith's class at the English Language Center, and we are very confused! We just don't understand the present perfect tense. We don't have this tense in our languages. We don't know when to use it, and we really don't like all these past participles, such as "given" and "driven." Why do we need this tense anyway? Why can't we just use the tenses we already know?

Sincerely,
"Perfectly Happy with the
Present and the Past"

Dear "Perfectly Happy,"

The present perfect tense has always been difficult for learners of English. We'll try to explain it to you with some examples.

We use the present perfect tense to talk about:

- things that happened (or didn't happen) sometime in the past, but the exact time isn't important. For example:

I have (I've) already seen that movie.*
He has (He's) never ridden a motorcycle.
She hasn't gone to the bank yet.

* If the exact time IS important, we use the past tense: "I saw a movie yesterday."

- things that happened many times in the past. For example:

I have (I've) driven trucks for many years.
We have (We've) eaten lunch there many times.

- things that happened in the past and are still happening in the present. For example:

I have (I've) known them for two years.
She has (She's) been sick since last Thursday.
They have (They've) lived here for a year.

It's interesting how different languages express time in different ways, and we can understand why this tense is difficult for you. In your languages, you might say:

- X I live here since last year.
- X I am living here since last year.
- X I lived here since last year.

In English, these are all wrong. Sorry! The correct way to say this is:

- ✓ I have (I've) lived here since last year.

This means "I lived here before, and I still live here now."

So that's why we need the present perfect tense in English. Thanks for your question, and good luck!



Sincerely,
Side by Side

Global Exchange

Alex32: I'm sorry I haven't written for a while. I've been very busy. I've taken four exams this week, and I have to take one more tomorrow. This weekend I'm going to relax. I'm going to see the new Julia Richards movie. (My sister saw it last week, and she says it's one of the best movies she's ever seen.) I'm also going to eat dinner with my family at a new Indian restaurant. I'm looking forward to it. We haven't been to a restaurant in a long time, and I've never eaten Indian food. And I'm going to visit our city's modern art museum. Believe it or not, I've lived here all my life, and I've never gone there! So, how have you been? Have you seen any movies recently? Have you eaten at any restaurants? Have you gone to any interesting places?

Tell a keypal about some things you've done recently.

What Are They Saying?

