

LIVE LESSONS

Being Busy

What you will learn:

Discover Language by Listening
Vocabulary about Being Busy
Idioms about Being Busy
Pros and Cons of Being Busy
IELTS Sample Answer
More Resources

Warm up!

Which of the following is true for you?

- 1) I rush to work
- 2) I rush my lunch
- 3) I rush my work
- 4) I'm in a rush all day

Discover Vocabulary By Listening

Listen to Chapter 1 of a story

<https://soundcloud.com/keithohare/a-busy-life-part-1>

1. What is Sam's job?
2. What will happen, if she doesn't slow down?

Answers at bottom of PDF

Listen again and fill in the gaps below (one word only)

1. She loved the **adrenaline** _____ of always chasing a new story.
2. She soon found herself with a very _____ **schedule**
3. Sam was _____ **off her feet**
4. She had to **follow the** _____ from the letter.
5. It was starting to **take its** _____

Listen again and read

Full Script on Next page

A Busy Life

Part 1: A Mysterious Letter



In a small, lively town, there was a journalist named Sam. She loved her job because it was very busy and exciting. She loved the **adrenaline rush** (=feeling of excitement) of always chasing a **new story**. She was agile and good at her job.

One day, Sam got a mysterious letter without a name on it. It talked about a big secret in the town, a possible **cover-up** (=hiding something bad you have done). Sam wanted to find out more because it could be the biggest story of her career.

She started to work on this new story and soon found herself with a very **hectic schedule**. She had to talk to many people and look at lots of information. Because of this, Sam was **rushed off her feet**. She had to do her regular work and also **follow the clues** from the letter.

Her days were hectic, and she felt **swamped with** work. Sam was doing too much and feeling overloaded. It was all starting to **take its toll** (= to have a serious and bad effect) If she didn't slow down, she'd end up in hospital.

To Be Continued...

IELTS Speaking Vocabulary: Being Busy

1. **Hectic** (adj.) /'hek.tɪk/
= very busy

Something is **hectic** (=very busy)

Work is hectic
My day is hectic
My life is hectic

To have a **hectic schedule**

*Things are **hectic** at work this week; two people are off sick.*

*I have such a **hectic schedule**; I can hardly find time for lunch.*

2. **Overloaded** (adj.) = carrying too big a load, having too much (... work, pressure)

To be **overloaded** with work

*I am **overloaded with** work, I need some help.*

3. **A rush** (n.) /rʌʃ/

= 1) a situation where you need to move quickly

= 2) A sudden quick movement

Similar words

A hurry

To be in a rush

To be in no rush

We are always in a rush in the mornings

*I'm in **no** rush to finish my dinner*

I'm not in a rush to finish my dinner

To rush (v.) = to do something quickly

Collocations

To rush around / about

To rush to (preposition)

To rush to do something (infinitive)

To rush someone / something

I was rushing around like a headless chicken

I had to rush to the shops

Don't rush to finish, take your time

Don't rush me!

You shouldn't rush your homework

To do something quickly

Positive

To do something **efficiently**

To do it **lightning-fast**

To do something **in a flash**

To do things in a **timely manner**

To be agile (=to move quickly, be flexible)

To be productive = (to do it efficiently)

Negative

To rush (through) something

To hurry something

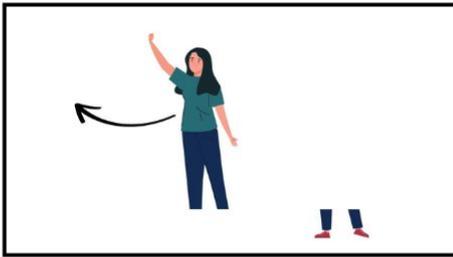
To do something **in a hurry** / **rush**

To do things **hastily**

IELTS Speaking Idioms: BEING BUSY

Can you guess the idioms?

1



2



3



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Answers at bottom of PDF

IELTS Speaking Sample Answer

Watch the answer to this question

Describe a time you had to finish something quickly

You should say,

What it was

When it was

Why you had to do it quickly

- 1) What did he have to finish quickly?
- 2) Did he sacrifice quality for speed?

Answer at end of PDF



Watch again and note any interesting collocations.

Full Script on Next page

Full script

Describe a time you had to finish something quickly

Well, **there was this one time** when I had to do an assignment.

I had to **hand in** (=give or submit) an assignment and I'd almost **run out of time** (=to have no time left) to finish it, so I had to really **get it done** (= do it, but emphasises quickly and often with external pressure) quite quickly.

This was when I was **working full time** and I was doing a master's degree part time, so I was **balancing work with study**.

And not only was I **swamped** [~~under~~]-with work, but also had to **meet the submission deadline** for this assignment.

And it was a really important assignment because it **counted towards** the final grade of the whole degree. so what did I do?

Well, I just **made a plan** for the whole week coming up to the deadline. I remember going out every evening and sitting in a coffee bar and studying.

I basically **pulled out all the stops** [=to do everything possible to succeed] to make sure I had the time to do it. I was literally **burning the candle at both ends**. (=working a lot, from late at night to early in the morning)

It was a bit of **a strain on** (= pressure on...) myself and my family, but in the end, yeah, I **pulled it off** (= I succeeded)

I managed to do the assignment effectively and I did a good job. And although I was rushing a bit, I managed to keep it a good level of quality.

And in the end, I got the grade that I wanted. So, yes, I **was pleased with** that.

IELTS Discussion: Be busy or take your time?

What are the advantages of being busy?

- You can get more work done
- Improved productivity
- A strong feeling of satisfaction
- No time to think or be distracted by negative thoughts

What are the advantages of being able to take your time?

- You can do things at your own pace
- Produce better quality work
- You'll avoid mistakes
- You can pay more attention to your work and do it better

A Busy Life

Part 2: A Successful Scoop

To avoid hospital, Sam knew she needed to be smart to finish her work. She decided to focus on the most important clues and asked other journalists to help her with other stories. This helped her to not **rush** and to be careful with her big story.

After working hard, Sam found the evidence she needed. She did everything **lightning-fast** but well, and soon she had all the facts to tell everyone the truth.

Sam's story was a big success. It showed a big secret that was hidden in the town, and people were very thankful for her work.

The town was in awe of the young journalist's tenacity and skill, and she went on to become a 'rising star' in the newspaper where she worked.



ANSWERS

Discover Language by Listening

Listen to Chapter 1 of a story

1. What is Sam's job?

She is a journalist

2. What will happen, if she doesn't slow down?

She will end up in hospital

Listen again and fill in the gaps below (one word only)

1. She loved the **adrenaline** rush of always chasing a new story.
2. She soon found herself with a very hectic **schedule**
3. Sam was rushed **off her feet**
4. She had to **follow the** clues from the letter.
5. It was starting to **take its** toll

IELTS Speaking Idioms: BEING BUSY

1. To be **rushed off your feet**

= Extremely busy or overwhelmed with tasks.

*I was **rushed off my feet** preparing for the presentation yesterday*

2. To be **snowed under**

= Having too much work to deal with.

*I'm **snowed under with** emails—I haven't even had lunch yet!*

3. To have a lot on your plate

= Have many responsibilities or tasks to manage.

*Between work, kids, and studying, **I've got a lot on my plate.***

4. To be **swamped (with something)**

= Overwhelmed or flooded with work or responsibilities.

*She's **swamped with** client meetings all week.*

IELTS Speaking Model Answer

- 1) What did he have to finish quickly?
- 2) Did he sacrifice quality for speed?

Answers

1. A university assignment
2. No, he didn't sacrifice quality for speed

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