

Giving Technical / 'How to' Instructions

Organization

When you give instructions in English, there are a few key points to remember. Look at the following set of (old) technical instructions. They are not in order. Put them in order with your group. (Label each letter number '1' '2' '3' . . . 8)



- a) Next, turn on the computer. (The switch is in the back.) The power light on the keyboard will light up.
- b) Then, close the disk drive door.
- c) After the power light comes on, press the reset key. (Reset key is in the upper right of the keyboard.)
- d) To start with, turn on the monitor (screen).
- e) Finally, press the “Return/Enter” key; after a few seconds, a message will say that the computer is ready.
- f) Once the disk drive door is open, the disk drive is ready to receive the disk.
- g) After pressing the “Reset” key, wait until the red light on the disk drive goes off, and then, open the disk drive door.
- h) Now, remove the disk from its envelope. Hold the disk face up, and carefully put the disk into the disk drive.

When you are finished, discuss these questions with your group:

- Was it easy to put these in order? Why or why not? What helped you?
- How could these instructions be made easier?

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The words that helped you know what order to put the instructions in, like '*To begin with*' and '*Finally*,' are called *sequencers* in English because they tell the order, or sequence of events. It is important to use sequencers when giving instructions. With your class, make a list of all the sequencers you can think of below:

Find all of the verbs used in the instructions. What can you say about them? What tense are they? The verb form used for giving instructions is often called the *imperative* or *command form* of the verb.

Task 2

Now that you know about sequencers and what types of verbs to use, write your own set of technical instructions with your partner or group. It can be for anything that uses a machine or device, such as a computer, a photocopier, a smart phone, a wireless device, a tablet, a coffee maker, or a microwave oven, for example. Think of things you use every day at work or at home. Write the instructions below.

- 5 or more steps please! Use present tense verbs!
- Use words like "first, next, after that, then, finally..."

DO NOT use "you"!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Now, stand up and share your 'How to' instructions with the whole class.

Guacamole Dip Recipe

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Ingredients:

- Avocados
- Green onions (spring onions)
- Tomato
- Garlic
- Lime
- Hot sauce

Cooking verbs

- Cut
- Peel
- Mince
- Mix
- Add
- Put in

Directions

First, cut 3 avocados, one tomato, and green onions.
Next, peel and mince some garlic.
Then, mix everything together.
After that, add some fresh lime juice and hot sauce.
Finally, put it in the refrigerator for 1 hour or more.
Now, it is ready to eat with taco chips. Enjoy!

My Recipe for

Ingredients:

Cooking words:

How to Make it (Step-by-step instructions):