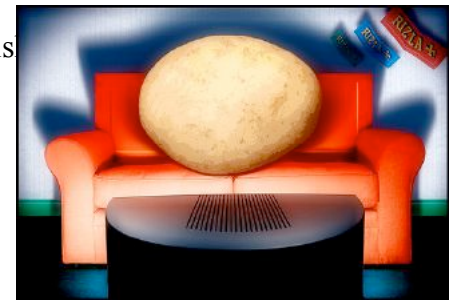
Couch Potato

Easy Access English



Introduction – Ask each other the questions

Do you have a TV?
Do you have a flat screen TV?
How big is your TV?
Is it mounted on the wall?
Do you have surround sound?
How many hours a day do you spend watching TV?
Do you ever plan your social life around the TV?
Do you follow a TV series?
What type of TV programmes do you watch?
What are your favourite programmes?

Act One – Let's be Couch Potatoes for a few minutes. Watch the film.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SDNzKnKO_8

Now tell the story with as much description and attention to detail as possible using the different past tenses.

This is going to be like a TV show. Your team will start to tell the story. As soon as a past tense mistake is made the other team takes over. At the end of the story, the team who made the least mistakes wins.

First let's revise the different tenses – see the **past tense guide.**

Act Two – research and resume.
http://www.wikihow.com/Be-a-Couch-Potato

Let's read from the article.
To resume the text use these expressions:

- **According** to the author…
- The article **goes on** to…
- The article **outlines** ways to…
- The author defines…. as being as follows….
- **We are advised to**…
- The author **claims** that…
- In the article there are ideas for…

Act Three Guess the theme tune – you tube.

Listen to the music and try to guess, in teams, which TV shows they come from. Let's see if you can guess the names of the shows in English!

Act Four – Quiz - Are you a couch potato? If you answer yes to more than half of these questions then, you ARE a couch potato!

- Do you have 'watching television' on the top of your list of hobbies?
- Do you get offended, if someone refers to television as 'an idiot box'?
- You do not remember birthdays and anniversaries, but remember the entire month's TV schedule.
- You prepare for a TV session with lots of popcorn, burgers, pizzas etc.
- Watching television for 5-7 hours on a stretch is a normal routine for you.
- You remember over 100 channels by their numbers on the remote control.
- You have seen all the seasons of a particular show and remember every episode.
- You wait desperately for new shows, which are being advertised heavily.
- You are always looking out to buy a bigger, better television.
- You meet your friends only to watch TV together.
- You co-ordinate your lunch and dinner timings with Television shows.

Act Five – read the article and answer the comprehension questions using the expressions.

It is clear that – The article proves that – Obviously – Clearly – It seems that- We can see that.

With export sales up 9% year on year to smash the £1bn mark. Sales of hit UK series, such Strictly come Dancing, Wife Swap, Come Dine With Me and MasterChef, to foreign broadcasters earned a record £1.34bn for the UK economy in 2009.

Overall sales of formats, when a foreign TV company buys rights to a series such as Come Dine With Me and then makes the show itself, rose 25% to £119m. Meanwhile, the trend towards producing UK formats abroad – a foreign TV company buys the rights for a show but asks a UK-owned company to make a localised version – gathered pace last year with a 124% rise in revenue to £41m.

The UK television industry's main customer is still the US, where British formats including American Idol(from Pop Idol) and Dancing with the Stars – the US version of Strictly Come Dancing – continue to pull in massive audiences. Transatlantic sales accounted for 36% of total export revenue, with a 3% growth in revenue to £485m. The overall North American market is worth £546m with "significant revenue contributions" from sales of videos and DVDs, formats and licensing. America's appetite for the best of British appears to be insatiable: a US version of MasterChef, presented by Gordon Ramsay, proved successful and Simon Cowels American Idol and X Factor.

A breakdown of the figures by region shows that the biggest market for buying finished programmes was, by some distance, Europe, which accounted for £256m of the total £549m in sales. By comparison North America, while by far the biggest overall market for all forms of UK television export sales, only accounted for £98m of sales of finished television shows. Booming sales of finished programming, the UK's largest source of TV income, accounted for 43% of the increase in total revenue for British TV producers last year.

"The UK has an unrivalled reputation on the global stage for producing high-quality, creative and groundbreaking TV programming," says Sir Andrew Cahn, the chief executive of UK Trade & Investment. "TV formats such as Britains Got Talent, Midsomer Murders and Spooks continue to captivate and inspire new audiences, demonstrating the global reach and appeal of the UK TV industry."

1. How much have sales increased by ?
2. Name some of the major exported shows.
3. What are the two ways in which shows can be sold or exported ?
4. What are the European and North American markets worth to the UK industry ?
5. How does the article explain the success of the UK TV industry ?