VOL. 5 WEEKLY IN ENGLISH Chaque semaine Ce dont parle le monde anglophone WEEK OF NOVEMBER 23 TO 29, 2026

The Lucerna

HEBDOMADAIRE EN ANGLAIS VOL.5 ACHATS NOËL CINÉMA

TEXTE EN ANGLAIS EXPLICATIONS EN FRANÇAIS – L'ÉDITION POUR LES LECTEURS FRANCOPHONES

BLACK FRIDAY WEEK IS HERE!

Vendredi 27 novembre Le Black Friday a déjà commencé

Friday, November 27: the big day. The sales began in October – and run to Monday, November 30.

Le budget et les factures d'hiver Voir page 6

THE BIG STORY À la une

Black Friday Week: The Sales Started Early

By The Lucerna newsroom Reading level: A2

On Friday, November 27, the shops open early for Black Friday – the biggest shopping day of the year. But the sales did not wait for Friday. In Britain, Currys started its sale on October 28, and Argos opened its sale at the end of October. Amazon's Black Friday Week runs from Thursday, November 19, to Cyber Monday, Monday, November 30 – twelve days of deals.

Black Friday is one day. The sales last all month. The shops call it "Black November": a month of offers, not a day. And the warnings are out too. Which?, the consumer group, tracked 175 products through the 2024 sales – and found none of them at its cheapest price of the year on Black Friday itself. For Amazon, 88% of the deals it tracked in 2024 were the same price, or cheaper, at another time of the year.

So the rule for this week is simple: check the price before you buy. A bargain is not a bargain if you did not need it. A price cut is only a cut if the old price was real. This issue shows you how to read a deal – and how to say "no" to it, in English.

There is help with winter, too. The Budget of October 28 gives £100 to many homes in England this winter, to help pay for energy – for homes in Council Tax bands A to D. The 5p cut in fuel duty, and the VAT cut on home electricity, run until July 2027.

Welcome to VOL.5 – and to the Christmas countdown.

Explication | Black Friday = Vendredi noir (le grand jour des soldes après Thanksgiving) · a bargain = bonne affaire · Cyber Monday = Cyber Monday.

THE WEEK IN NUMBERS Chiffres

Nov 27 – Black Friday (Vendredi noir) · Nov 30 – Cyber Monday

12 – jours de la Black Friday Week d'Amazon

175 – produits suivis par Which? en 2024 (aucun au plus bas le jour même)

£100 – aide énergie cet hiver

TRY IT NOW À vous de jouer

A2 1.
Black Friday is on ___, November 27.

A2 2.
Cyber Monday is on ___, November 30.

A2 3.
The ___ started before Black Friday.

A2 4.
Which? found no product at its ___ price.

B1 5.
The Budget gives £___ for winter bills.

B1 6.
A ___ is a thing bought for less than usual.

SEARCHES OF THE WEEK

Recherches de la semaine Google Trends

1. **black friday**
2. **wicked for good**
3. **i'm a celebrity**
4. **strictly blackpool**
5. **advent calendar**

Snapshots, mid-November: search interest changes during the day.
Intérêt relatif, pas des volumes exacts.

IN THIS ISSUE Sommaire

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THE WORD OF THE WEEK

"bargain"
a thing bought for less than its usual price. "A real bargain!" = a very good price.

Une bonne affaire, c'est un bon prix, pas un objet bon marché.



A wild turkey, drawn by John James Audubon. Thanksgiving is on Thursday, November 26 – the day before Black Friday, and the first day of the long shopping weekend.

John James Audubon – public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

ONE DAY, FOUR DAYS

Black Friday is one day: Friday, November 27. But the sales run for four days – Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Cyber Monday, November 30. That is why the shops say "Black Friday Weekend".

Read page 6 for the Budget – and the numbers behind the sales.

IN BRIEF En bref

BUDGET
Oct 28: the Chancellor's first Budget. £100 for winter energy bills. (p. 6)

JUNGLE
Mon, Nov 16, 9 p.m.: I'm a Celebrity returns to ITV1. (p. 5)

WICKED
Nov 21: Wicked: For Good opens in cinemas. (p. 3)

LIGHTNING QUIZ Quiz éclair

Lisez la une, choisissez la bonne réponse Réponses page 8

A2 7.
Black Friday 2026 is on... A. Nov 26 · B. Nov 27 · C. Nov 30

A2 8.
Cyber Monday is on... A. Mon, Nov 30 · B. Fri, Nov 27 · C. Thu, Nov 26

A2 9.
Amazon's Black Friday Week runs... A. 2 days · B. 7 days · C. 12 days

B1 10.
The £100 energy payment is for... A. every home in the UK · B. homes in Council Tax bands A–D in England · C. shops

The First Sunday of Advent: Four Candles, Four Weeks

By The Lucerna newsroom Reading level: A2

On Sunday, November 29, the first candle is lit. It is the first Sunday of Advent – four Sundays of waiting, four candles, and then Christmas Day, on Friday, December 25. In Britain, Advent is the quiet start of Christmas: the markets open, the lights go on, and the countdown begins.

The Christmas tree has a long story in Britain. The first royal tree stood at Windsor in December 1800, put up by Queen Charlotte, the German-born wife of King George III. But the tree became famous in 1848, when the Illustrated London News printed a picture of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and their children around a candlelit tree at Windsor Castle. The tree in the picture stood on a table – not on the floor. In 1850, an American magazine printed the same picture, with the royal family changed into an ordinary family.

The tree stood on a table, not on the floor. That is the sentence to remember from this page – and the picture on this page is the American copy, from Godey's Lady's Book, December 1850.

This year, the Christmas countdown has a new face. On Tuesday, November 3, John Lewis showed its Christmas advert for 2026: “Gloria and Pickles”. Gloria, played by Dame Kristin Scott Thomas, is a grandmother who wants to give her grandchildren a real present – not money in a card. Pickles, her old toy dog, comes to life and talks her into one last shopping trip. The song is Sam Fender's cover of the Rolling Stones' “You Can't Always Get What You Want”. The line is: “Don't give up on giving.” It is the twentieth John Lewis Christmas advert.

And on Monday, November 30, Scotland has its own day: St Andrew's Day, a bank holiday in Scotland. St Andrew is Scotland's patron saint – and the day is the last day of the sales, Cyber Monday, too. One day, two reasons to stay at home – or to go out.

Four candles, four weeks. Light one each Sunday, and Christmas will come.

THE CALENDAR Calendrier

Nov 29 – Premier dimanche de l'Avent · Nov 30 – Saint-André, Écosse (fête de la Saint-André)

Dec 25 – Christmas Day, Friday (Noël, vendredi) · Nov 3 – publicité John Lewis (sortie)

WHAT IS ON THIS WEEK?

Second story of the week – and it is on your screen. On Saturday, November 21, the dancers go to Blackpool for Strictly Come Dancing, and the new Wicked film opens in cinemas. On Thursday, November 26, Zootropolis 2 opens – and on Friday, November 27, the sales reach their peak. Page 3 has the film guide, page 4 the sport.

On television, the week is just as full. I'm a Celebrity is on every night from the jungle, and the shops are full every day. Advent begins on Sunday – and the first candle is lit.

How do you say the date of Christmas? “On Friday, December 25.” is the sentence of the week. The phrase box below shows three ways to say it.

Note | Explication | Advent = Avent · a candle = bougie · a patron saint = saint patron.



“The Christmas Tree”, from Godey's Lady's Book, December 1850 – the American copy of the famous 1848 Windsor picture. The tree stands on a table, with the family around it.
After Joseph Lionel Williams – public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

DID YOU KNOW?

Advent means “coming”: four Sundays before Christmas.

Queen Charlotte's tree of 1800 was the first royal Christmas tree in Britain.

The 1848 tree was a fir about eight feet high, with six tiers of branches.

AND YOU? Et vous ?

What does your family do in the last week of November? Do you light a candle, open a calendar, or go to a market? Write three sentences in English for VOL.6.

Que fait ta famille fin novembre ? Trois phrases en anglais.

SAY IT: MERRY CHRISTMAS! Comment le dire à Noël

Three greetings for the season Trois vœux pour les fêtes

Happy Advent!
Bon Avent !

Merry Christmas!
Joyeux Noël !

Happy St Andrew's Day!
Bonne Saint-André !

an advent calendar = a calendar with 24 doors
a candle = a stick of wax that burns
a market = small shops outside (un marché)
a saint = a holy person (un saint)

EXERCISES Exercices

Réponses page 8 Retrouvez chaque réponse par son numéro

A THE DATE

Complétez les dates en anglais.

A2 11. Complétez
Advent begins on Sunday, November __.

A2 12. Complétez
Christmas Day is on __, December 25.

A2 13. Complétez
St Andrew's Day is on __, November 30.

A2 14. Complétez
The advert came out on November __.

A2 15. Complétez
The first royal tree dates from __.

B WILL

Réécrivez avec will + verbe.

A2 16. Réécrivez
Families (light) the first candle on Sunday. → __

A2 17. Réécrivez
Christmas (come) in four weeks. → __

A2 18. Réécrivez
We (open) the calendar on December 1. → __

B1 19. Réécrivez
They (watch) the advert again? → __

C COMPREHENSION

Lisez la page 2 et choisissez.

A2 20.
The first Sunday of Advent is... A. Nov 22 · B. Nov 29 · C. Dec 25

A2 21.
The 1848 tree stood... A. on the floor · B. in the garden · C. on a table

A2 22.
The advert is called... A. “Gloria and Pickles” · B. “Happy Advent” · C. “The Christmas Tree”

A2 23.
St Andrew's Day is a bank holiday in... A. England · B. Scotland · C. Wales

D THE WORDS

A2 24–27. Associez

24. an advent calendar
25. a candle
26. a market
27. a saint

a. a holy person
b. a calendar with 24 little doors
c. a place with small shops outside
d. a stick of wax that burns

At the Movies: Two Witches and a Fox

By The Lucerna newsroom Reading level: A2 → B1

On November 21, a familiar name returns to the cinema: Elphaba, the Wicked Witch of the West. “Wicked: For Good” is the second half of the story that began with “Wicked” in 2024. Cynthia Erivo plays Elphaba, and Ariana Grande plays Glinda, the Good Witch. Jonathan Bailey plays Fiyero, Jeff Goldblum plays the Wizard, and Michelle Yeoh plays Madame Morrible. Jon M. Chu directs.

The first film was a hit: it took more than $750 million around the world. Now the second film is expected to open big. Early forecasts put the first weekend at $112 million to $115 million in North America alone, and about $200 million around the world. The story comes from L. Frank Baum's book “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz”, published in 1900 – the picture on this page is from that first book.

Two witches, one fox – and a ballroom in Blackpool. That is this week in one line: two witches on the big screen, a fox on the big screen too – and dancing in Blackpool on Saturday night.

The fox is Nick Wilde – and Judy Hopps, the rabbit police officer, is back with him. “Zootropolis 2” opens on Thursday, November 26. Judy and Nick chase a snake, Gary De'Snake, voiced by Ke Huy Quan. The first film, in 2016, took more than $1 billion around the world and won the Oscar for Best Animated Feature. The directors, Jared Bush and Byron Howard, are back too.

And on the dance floor? On Saturday, November 21, at 6:35 p.m., Strictly Come Dancing goes to Blackpool. Eight couples dance in the Tower Ballroom. Last Sunday, Will Best and his partner Dianne Buswell left the show, one week before Blackpool – they lost the dance-off to Jaime Winstone and Carlos Gu. At the top of the leaderboard: Cach Mercer and Maddie Ingoldsby, with 39 points out of 40 for their Charleston.

COMING SOON Bientôt

Nov 21 – “Wicked: For Good” opens in cinemas. The first film took more than $750 million worldwide.

Nov 21 – Strictly Come Dancing: Blackpool, 6:35 p.m., BBC One. Eight couples left.

Nov 26 – “Zootropolis 2” opens in cinemas. Judy and Nick chase a snake.

A film is not only a story – it is also English practice. Listen for three things: the catchphrase (the line everybody repeats), the joke (why does the room laugh?), and the ending (happy, sad, or open?). After the film, try to tell the story in five English sentences.

And if you stay at home, the same rule works for a series: one episode, five sentences, in English. The best five-sentence reviews will be printed in VOL.6 – send yours to the newsroom.

Note | Explication | a witch = sorcière · a forecast = prévision · a dance-off = duel de danse · a leaderboard = classement.

A COMPREHENSION

Lisez l'article de la page 3 et choisissez la bonne réponse.

A2 28.
“Wicked: For Good” opens on… A. November 20 · B. November 21 · C. November 26

A2 29.
Elphaba is played by… A. Cynthia Erivo · B. Ariana Grande · C. Michelle Yeoh

A2 30.
The first Wicked film took… A. less than $100 million · B. about $200 million · C. more than $750 million

B1 31.
“Zootropolis 2” opens on… A. Nov 21 · B. Thu, Nov 26 · C. Nov 29

B1 32.
The snake in Zootropolis 2 is voiced by… A. Ke Huy Quan · B. Jason Bateman · C. Jared Bush

B1 33.
Blackpool night is on… A. Sunday · B. Friday · C. Saturday, November 21

B SENTENCES

Complétez la phrase avec le mot donné.

A2 34. Complétez
The film ___ on November 21.

A2 35. Complétez
Nick Wilde is a ___.

B1 36. Complétez
The first Zootropolis film ___ an Oscar.

B1 37. Complétez
Cach and Maddie scored 39 ___ out of 40.

C THE WORDS

A2 38–41. Associez

38. a witch
39. a forecast
40. a dance-off
41. a leaderboard

a. a list that shows who is winning
b. a woman with magic powers
c. a dance that decides who leaves
d. a guess about what will happen

D PAST SIMPLE

Réécrivez au prétérit (choses déjà arrivées).

A2 42. Réécrivez
The first film (take) more than $750 million. → ___

A2 43. Réécrivez
Baum (publish) the book in 1900. → ___

B1 44. Réécrivez
Will Best (leave) the show on Sunday.→ ___

B1 45. Réécrivez
The first film (win) an Oscar.→ ___



The Wicked Witch of the West melts – W. W. Denslow's drawing from the first edition of “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz” (1900). The film's witches come from this book.
W. W. Denslow – public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

THE WITCHES Les deux sorcières

Elphaba, the Wicked Witch of the West, and Glinda, the Good Witch: two friends, two choices, one story. The book is from 1900 – the film is from this week.

FIVE SENTENCES

After any film or episode, tell the story in five English sentences: who, where, what happened, the surprise, the ending. Five sentences are enough – and they are excellent practice.

Example: “A witch leaves home. She meets a friend and loses her. She learns a hard truth. She flies away – free. Then the story starts again.” Now it is your turn.

Cinq phrases : qui, où, ce qui s'est passé, le rebondissement, la fin – cinq phrases suffisent.

Derby Weekend: Liverpool, Arsenal, Twickenham

By The Lucerna newsroom Reading level: B1

Sunday, November 29, is derby day – twice. At 12:00, Everton play Liverpool in the Merseyside derby. At 4:30, Arsenal play Manchester City. Two derbies, one Sunday, and the title race in between. The Premier League's twelfth week begins on Friday, November 27: Nottingham Forest play Chelsea at 8 p.m. On Saturday, November 28, Manchester United play Brentford – and Leeds play Coventry.

The league returns this Saturday, November 21, after the international break: Manchester City play Fulham at 12:30, and Newcastle play Arsenal at 5:30. On Sunday, November 22, Liverpool play Manchester United at 4:30 – and on Monday, November 23, Brentford play Everton at 8 p.m. Then, a week later, comes the derby weekend.

Rugby has a final, too. The Nations Championship – the new name for the autumn internationals – ends with a Finals Weekend at Twickenham, from Friday, November 27, to Sunday, November 29. The first final is on Sunday, November 29. Before that, on Saturday, November 21, England play New Zealand at Twickenham at 2:10 p.m. – the biggest game of the autumn. England have already beaten Australia, 45–22, and Japan, 78–15, at Twickenham this month.

And tennis ends its year in Turin. The ATP Finals run from Sunday, November 15, to Sunday, November 22. The eight best singles players of the year play in two groups of four. The champion of the last two years, Jannik Sinner, is out with a knee injury – so a new champion is certain. The semi-finals are on Saturday, November 21. The finals are on Sunday, November 22: the doubles final at 3 p.m. local time, and the singles final not before 6 p.m.

The first international ended 0–0 – and football has never stopped since. That was Scotland against England, on November 30, 1872, at Hamilton Crescent in Glasgow. About 4,000 people watched. The picture on this page is from that day – and November 30 is still a football date: it is St Andrew's Day, and Cyber Monday, too.

How do you follow three sports in one day? Choose one game to watch fully, and follow the others on your phone. That is the modern fan: one screen for the game, one screen for the scores.

WHY NOVEMBER 30? Pourquoi le 30 ?

November 30, 1872: the first international, Scotland 0–0 England. November 30, 2026: St Andrew's Day in Scotland – and Cyber Monday. Football began on a St Andrew's Day.

The ATP Finals in Turin run from Sunday, November 15, to Sunday, November 22. The eight best singles players of the year play in two groups of four: Alexander Zverev, Carlos Alcaraz, Ben Shelton, Daniil Medvedev, Flavio Cobolli, Arthur Fils, Frances Tiafoe and Rafael Jodar. The champion of the last two years, Jannik Sinner, is out with a knee injury.

Note | Explication | a derby = derby · a final = finale · a break = pause · a draw = match nul.

A COMPREHENSION

Lisez l'article de la page 4 et choisissez la bonne réponse.

B1 46.
The Merseyside derby is on… A. Sat, Nov 28 · B. Sun, Nov 29, 12:00 · C. Mon, Nov 30

B1 47.
Arsenal play Manchester City on… A. Fri, Nov 27 · B. Sat, Nov 28 · C. Sun, Nov 29, 16:30

B1 48.
The Nations Championship final is on… A. Sunday, November 29 · B. Saturday, November 21 · C. Friday, November 27

B1 49.
England play New Zealand on… A. Nov 14 · B. Sat, Nov 21, 2:10 p.m. · C. Nov 29

B1 50.
The ATP singles final is not before… A. 3 p.m. · B. 12 p.m. · C. 6 p.m. local time

B1 51.
The first international was played on… A. November 30, 1872 · B. November 30, 2026 · C. November 21, 1872

B SENTENCES

Complétez la phrase avec le mot donné.

B1 52. Complétez
Everton v Liverpool is a ___.

B1 53. Complétez
The Nations Championship ends with a ___.

B1 54. Complétez
England have ___ Australia and Japan at Twickenham.

A2 55. Complétez
Scotland 0–0 England: the game was a ___.

C THE WORDS

B1 56–59. Associez

56. a derby
57. a final
58. a break
59. a draw

a. a pause between parts of a season
b. a game that ends with the same score
c. the last game of a competition
d. a game between two teams from the same city

D PAST SIMPLE

Réécrivez au prétérit (pour parler d'un match terminé).

B1 60. Réécrivez
England (beat) Australia 45–22 on November 8. → ___

B1 61. Réécrivez
Scotland (play) England in 1872. → ___

B1 62. Réécrivez
About 4,000 people (watch) the game. → ___

B1 63. Réécrivez
Sinner (miss) the ATP Finals with a knee injury. → ___



The first international: Scotland against England, November 30, 1872, at Hamilton Crescent, Glasgow. The game ended 0–0. The drawing is by William Ralston.

William Ralston – public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

DERBY WEEKEND Week-end des derbys

Fri Nov 27: Forest–Chelsea 20:00. Sat Nov 28: Man Utd–Brentford, Leeds–Coventry.

Sun Nov 29: Everton–Liverpool 12:00, Arsenal–Man City 16:30.

Rugby finals weekend: Fri Nov 27–Sun Nov 29, Twickenham.

ONE SCREEN, TWO SCREENS

The modern fan watches one game fully and follows the others on a phone. Try it in English: "The score is 1–0." "Who scored?" "Liverpool are winning!" – short sentences, live English.

Anglais du match : le score, qui a marqué, qui mène – des phrases courtes, c'est l'anglais en direct.

Into the Jungle: Eleven Campmates, Three Weeks

By The Lucerna newsroom Reading level: B1

On Monday, November 16, at 9 p.m., eleven famous faces walk into the Australian jungle. “I'm a Celebrity… Get Me Out of Here!” is back on ITV1 – and it will be on every night for about three weeks. Ant and Dec are back too, live from the camp near Murwillumbah in New South Wales.

Who is in the camp? Wayne Rooney, the former England captain, leads the line-up. Joanna Page, who plays Stacey in “Gavin & Stacey”, is there. So is Ade Adepitan, the Paralympic medallist and television presenter – the first wheelchair user ever to take part in the show. ITV has changed the camp for him: the paths and the trials are built so a wheelchair can use them.

The other eight are AJ Odudu, the Big Brother presenter; Ricky Wilson, the Kaiser Chiefs singer; Sharky, the YouTuber from the Beta Squad; Chloe Burrows, from Love Island; Claire Sweeney, the actress; Jack Skipper, the comedian; Leomie Anderson, the model; and Mariella Frostrup, the broadcaster. Eleven campmates – and more may arrive later. Late arrivals are a tradition on this show.

What do they do in the jungle? They live together, cook together, and take Bushtucker Trials – the challenges that win food for the camp. Each star is a meal: win ten stars, and the camp eats ten meals. The public votes, and the last one standing is the King or Queen of the Jungle.

In the jungle, a star is a meal. That is the sentence to remember – and the reason the trials matter. A star is not a prize for the wall. It is dinner.

Why does Britain watch? Because the jungle is honest television: famous people, no make-up, no phones, and rice and beans for dinner. And because the launch is a national moment: the show usually starts on a Sunday, but this year it starts on a Monday – because England played Spain in the Nations League on Sunday, November 15.

THE CAMP IN NUMBERS Le camp

11 – campmates on the first night. 3 – weeks in the jungle, about. 1 – first wheelchair user in the show's history.

If you want to practise jungle English, try this: watch one trial, and say what happened in three English sentences. “He ate the bug. He won five stars. The camp eats tonight.” Three sentences – and a whole evening of practice.

Note | Explication | a campmate = campeur · a trial = épreuve · a star = étoile (= un repas) · the public = public

A COMPREHENSION

Lisez l'article de la page 5 et choisissez la bonne réponse.

B1 64.
“I'm a Celebrity” starts on… A. Sun, Nov 15 · B. Mon, Nov 16, 9 p.m. · C. Fri, Nov 20

B1 65.
The first wheelchair user in the show is… A. Ade Adepitan · B. Wayne Rooney · C. Ricky Wilson

B1 66.
The camp is near… A. Sydney · B. Perth · C. Murwillumbah, New South Wales

B1 67.
How many campmates on the first night? A. 8 · B. 11 · C. 12

B1 68.
A star in a trial means… A. one meal for the camp · B. one vote · C. one night

B1 69.
The show starts a day late because… A. of the rain · B. of the film · C. England played Spain on Sunday

B SENTENCES

Complétez la phrase avec le mot donné.

B1 70. Complétez
Eleven famous faces walk into the ___.

B1 71. Complétez
Win ten ___, and the camp eats ten meals.

A2 72. Complétez
The public ___ for the King or Queen of the Jungle.

A2 73. Complétez
More campmates may ___ later.

C THE WORDS

B1 74–77. Associez

74. a campmate
75. a trial
76. a star
77. the public

a. the people who watch and vote
b. a person who lives with you in the jungle camp
c. a challenge that wins food
d. one meal, won in a trial

D PRESENT CONTINUOUS

Réécrivez au présent continu (une action en cours).

B1 78. Réécrivez
The campmates (live) in the jungle. → ___

B1 79. Réécrivez
Ant and Dec (present) the show. → ___

B1 80. Réécrivez
The public (vote) every night. → ___

B1 81. Réécrivez
They (cook) rice for the camp. → ___



A tiger in a painted jungle: Henri Rousseau's “Surprised!” (1891). The real jungle is on television every night – and the campmates are in it.
Henri Rousseau – public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

SPEAK UP IN THE JUNGLE La jungle

“I'm a Celebrity – get me out of here!” “Ten stars!” “The camp eats tonight!” – three sentences for three weeks. Learn them, and Monday night in English is yours.

THE TRIALS

A trial is a test: eat it, hold it, find it. The stars are counted in public, and the camp watches every one. The worst trial is the one with no stars at all.

Les épreuves | Manger, tenir, trouver – les étoiles sont comptées devant tout le monde, le camp regarde.

AFTER THE JUNGLE

After three weeks, one campmate is crowned King or Queen of the Jungle. The others go home – to showers, to phones, and to real food. The jungle stays in Australia. The stories come home with them.

The Budget and Your Winter Bills

By The Lucerna newsroom Reading level: B2

On Wednesday, October 28, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, John Healey, stood up in the House of Commons and read the Budget. It was his first Budget – and the first Budget of the new Prime Minister, Andy Burnham. The slogan was “Breathing Space now, Hope for the Future”. In plain English: help now, hope later.

What is a budget? It is the government's plan for the year: how much money it will take in tax, and how much it will spend. A budget is a plan, not a present. The money has to come from somewhere – and this Budget says it will not come from higher taxes on working people. That promise was in the government's 2024 manifesto, and the Chancellor says he will keep it.

So what changes for you? Three things this winter. First, £100 for energy: households in Council Tax bands A to D in England get a £100 Household Energy Payment this winter. Second, the 5p cut in fuel duty – the tax on petrol and diesel – runs until July 2027. Third, the VAT cut on electricity at home runs until July 2027 too. A hundred pounds does not buy a winter – but it buys a warmer one.

What else? The Budget also raises money in other places: a temporary 3% rise in the tax on the profits of banks and building societies, for fifteen months from January 2027. And the Finance Bill – the law that turns the Budget into rules – was introduced in Parliament on November 3.

What happens next? The Budget is not one day. The Welsh Government publishes its draft budget on November 17. The Scottish Parliament sets its tax rates on December 3. Parliament debates the Finance Bill, line by line. And the help arrives in the winter – when the bills arrive too.

A note on numbers in this issue: this paper prints the Budget of October 28, and says so. The numbers are the ones the Chancellor read to the House of Commons. When the Finance Bill becomes law, VOL.6 will report what changed.

A PRACTICE BILL Une facture

Your winter bill: electricity £120 a month · gas £90 a month. The £100 payment covers most of one month of electricity. The numbers are practice numbers – they teach how to read a bill, not what you will pay.

This issue went to press on Monday, November 16, 2026. The Welsh draft budget comes out on Tuesday, November 17 – one day after press time. VOL.6 will carry the Welsh numbers.

Note | Explication | a budget = budget · a manifesto = programme électoral · fuel duty = taxe sur le carburant · a bill = facture ; projet de loi.

READ THE CHART Graphique

How big was the help? The chart is the Budget of October 28 – not a prediction.

Budget day: Wednesday, October 28, 2026

Energy payment: £100, Council Tax bands A–D, England

Fuel duty cut: 5p a litre, until July 2027

VAT cut on home electricity: until July 2027

Bank tax rise: 3%, fifteen months from January 2027

Next dates: Wales November 17 · Scotland December 3

A CHART READING

Lis le tableau du budget ci-dessus et choisis la bonne réponse.

B2 82.
The Budget was read on… A. Nov 16 · B. Wed, Oct 28 · C. Dec 3

B2 83.
The energy payment is… A. £100 · B. £5 · C. £1,000

B2 84.
The fuel duty cut runs until… A. Nov 2026 · B. Jan 2027 · C. July 2027

B2 85.
The bank tax rise lasts… A. 3 months · B. 15 months · C. 3 years

B2 86.
Wales publishes its draft budget on… A. November 17 · B. November 3 · C. December 3

B2 87.
Scotland sets its tax rates on… A. Nov 17 · B. Oct 28 · C. Dec 3

B COMPREHENSION

Lisez l'article de la page 6 et choisissez la bonne réponse.

B2 88.
A budget is… A. a present · B. a plan for the year · C. a bank

B2 89.
The Chancellor says taxes on working people will… A. not rise · B. rise a lot · C. fall to zero

B2 90.
The £100 payment is for… A. shops · B. every home in the UK · C. homes in bands A–D in England

B2 91.
The Finance Bill was introduced on… A. Oct 28 · B. Nov 3 · C. Dec 3

B2 92.
The Budget's slogan is… A. “Breathing Space now, Hope for the Future” · B. “Black November” · C. “Don't give up on giving”

B2 93.
What will VOL.6 report? A. the 2024 sales · B. the jungle final · C. what changed when the Bill becomes law

C SENTENCES

Complétez la phrase avec le mot donné.

B2 94. Complétez
The ___ is the government's plan for the year.

B2 95. Complétez
The Chancellor says he will ___ his promise.

B2 96. Complétez
The fuel duty cut runs ___ July 2027.

B1 97. Complétez
Parliament ___ the Finance Bill, line by line.

B1 98. Complétez
The help ___ in the winter.

B1 99. Complétez
The Budget ___ money from the banks.

THREE WINTER HELPS Trois aides

£100 energy payment · 5p fuel duty cut · VAT cut on home electricity. All three run this winter.

A PLAN, NOT A PRESENT

A budget is a plan, not a present. Learn the plan, and the winter makes sense.

Un plan, pas un cadeau | Un budget est un plan, pas un cadeau – comprends le plan, et l'hiver devient clair.

WHO PAYS?

Every budget has two sides: who gets help, and who pays. This Budget helps homes with their bills – and asks the banks to pay a little more, for fifteen months.

Qui est aidé, qui paie ? | Chaque budget a deux faces : qui reçoit de l'aide, et qui paie.

WORDS A2 bargain

Note | Explication | bargain veut dire « bonne affaire » : le prix est bon, l'objet n'est pas forcément mauvais.

bargain = a thing bought for less than its usual price. “A real bargain!” = a very good price.

A2: “I bought a book for £5 – a real bargain!” The price is low, and the book is good. A bargain is a good price, not a cheap thing.

Try it: sale / bargain – the sale is the event, the bargain is the thing you buy. “The sale is on. I found a bargain.”

WORDS B1 more / less

Note | Explication | comparative, le comparatif : more than / less than pour parler de quantité et de taille.

more than = a bigger number than. less than = a smaller number than. £100 is more than £5. £5 is less than £100.

B1: “£100 is more than the £5 I spent.” With numbers, use more than and less than: more people, less money, more seats, less time.

Try it: “The film is longer than the trailer.” “The book is cheaper than the film.”

GRAMMAR A2 will + verb

Note | Explication | will + infinitif : pour ce qui va se passer ; dans les questions, will se met au début.

The sales will end on November 30. Advent will begin on Sunday. Will the price fall again? Nobody knows.

Rule: will + verb, no -s, no -ed. “She will buy.” “They will watch.” Question: “Will they shop on Friday?”

GRAMMAR B1 have done

Note | Explication | present perfect : have/has + participe passé – pour ce qui a commencé et vaut encore.

The sales have started already. The shops have opened early. “Have started” = they started, and they are still on.

Rule: have/has + past participle. “I have bought a book.” “She has lit the candle.” Question: “Have you bought a bargain?”

GRAMMAR B2 headlines

Note | Explication | headline present = le présent des titres : les journaux racontent au présent ce qui s'est déjà passé.

Newspapers often use the present in headlines for what already happened: “Shops Open Early for Black Friday” – the shops opened, but the headline says Open. The present makes the news feel fresh. This issue's headline does the opposite on purpose: “Black Friday Week: The Sales Started Early” uses Started, the past – because the news is the early start, not the day itself.

GRAMMAR B2 if + will

Note | Explication | first conditional, la première forme du conditionnel : if + présent, will + verbe – pour ce qui peut arriver.

If you buy early, you will save money. If the price falls, I will buy two. If = when this happens, that happens.

GOLDEN SENTENCES

Phrases d'or (phrases originales de ce numéro) – apprenez-les par cœur, et vous pourrez écrire comme ça.

“Black Friday is one day. The sales last all month.”

–– From page 1 of this issue.

“A bargain is not a bargain if you did not need it.”

–– From page 1 of this issue.

“The tree stood on a table, not on the floor.”

–– From page 2 of this issue.

“Two witches, one fox – and a ballroom in Blackpool.”

–– From page 3 of this issue.

“The first international ended 0–0 – and football has never stopped since.”

–– From page 4 of this issue.

“In the jungle, a star is a meal.”

–– From page 5 of this issue.

“A budget is a plan, not a present.”

–– From page 6 of this issue.

“A hundred pounds does not buy a winter – but it buys a warmer one.”

–– From page 6 of this issue.

THE DRILLS Exercices

Complète avec : bargain / more / less / will / started / whether / chose / opens.

A2 100. Complétez
“A ___ is a thing bought for less than usual.”

B1 101. Complétez
£100 is ___ than £5.

B1 102. Complétez
£5 is ___ than £100.

A2 103. Complétez
The sales ___ end on November 30.

B1 104. Complétez
The sales have ___ already.

B2 105. Complétez
Nobody knows ___ the price will fall again.

B2 106. Complétez
ITV ___ Monday for the launch.

A2 107. Complétez
“Zootropolis 2” ___ on November 26.

ERROR CLINIC Les erreurs

A2 108. Corrigez
“The sales is starting early.” (wrong verb)

A2 109. Corrigez
“A bargain are a good price.” (wrong verb)

B1 110. Corrigez
“£100 is less then £5.” (wrong word)

B2 111. Corrigez
“Nobody knows if the sales will end or not whether.” (wrong structure)



Samuel Johnson, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1772. Johnson's dictionary fixed English words – and this page fixes yours.

Sir Joshua Reynolds – public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

THE TOOLBOX Boîte à outils

A2 – “A bargain is a good price.” Une bonne affaire, c'est un bon prix.

B1 – “£100 is more than £5.” 100 livres, c'est plus que 5 livres.

B2 – “If you buy early, you will save money.” Acheter tôt, c'est économiser.

READERS' CORNER Courrier

VOL.4 promised real letters from VOL.5. No letters arrived by press time. This page keeps the promise open: send your letter, your three sentences, or your five-sentence film review to the newsroom. Real letters, with your name and city only if you give them, will appear here from VOL.6.

Le VOL.4 l'avait promis : à partir du VOL.5, nous publions les vraies lettres des lecteurs. Aucune lettre n'était arrivée au moment de mettre sous presse – la promesse reste valable : envoyez votre lettre, vos trois phrases ou votre critique de film en cinq phrases à la rédaction. Les vraies lettres paraîtront à partir du VOL.6, avec votre nom et votre ville seulement si vous l'acceptez.

AN EXAMPLE LETTER Exemple

This letter is written by the editor, only to show the shape. It is not a reader's letter. No name and no city are given, because no real letter has arrived yet.

“Dear Lucerna, I read the Black Friday story with my class. We checked the prices together – £100, 5p, 88%. My question: is a bargain still a bargain if I buy two? Thank you for the numbers.” – A reader, somewhere in the world.

Cette lettre a été écrite par la rédaction, seulement pour montrer la forme. Ce n'est pas une lettre de lecteur. Ni nom ni ville n'y figurent, car aucune vraie lettre n'est encore arrivée.

NEXT WEEK Aperçu du VOL.6

Cyber Monday and the first week of December: the jungle final, the Strictly semi-final, the first Nations Championship final – and your letters, the first real ones.

A CLOZE Texte à trous

Maya is a student in London. This week, she is following the sales. On (112)__ morning, November 26, she watches Zootropolis 2 with her class. On Friday, she reads the news about Black Friday. She learns a new word: a bargain is a thing bought for less than usual. She (113)__ the word in her notebook. On Saturday, she writes a sentence: “Black Friday is one day, but the sales (114)__ all month.” Her teacher smiles: “The shops (115)__ their sales on October 28.” Maya (116)__ the prices in her notebook: the shops (117)__ their prices every day. On Sunday, she (118)__ an advent candle with her family. And on Monday, she (119)__ her three sentences about the week to the newsroom.

Les choix :

112. [A2] A. Monday · B. Thursday · C. Friday

113. [A2] A. write · B. writes · C. is wrote

114. [A2] A. lasts · B. last · C. lasting

115. [A2] A. started · B. start · C. starting

116. [B1] A. write · B. writes · C. writing

117. [B1] A. changes · B. changed · C. change

118. [B1] A. lighting · B. light · C. lights

119. [B1] A. sends · B. send · C. sending

B MULTIPLE CHOICE QCM

A2 120.
How many days is Amazon's Black Friday Week? A. 7 · B. 12 · C. 30

A2 121.
Black Friday 2026 is on... A. Fri, Nov 27 · B. Thu, Nov 26 · C. Mon, Nov 30

A2 122.
How many products did Which? track in 2024? A. 12 · B. 88 · C. 175

A2 123.
“Zootropolis 2” opens on... A. Nov 21 · B. Thu, Nov 26 · C. Nov 29

A2 124.
The first Sunday of Advent is... A. Nov 29 · B. Dec 25 · C. Nov 22

B1 125.
The Nations Championship final is on... A. Nov 21 · B. Sun, Nov 29 · C. Nov 27

B1 126.
The Budget gives £100 for... A. winter energy bills · B. new films · C. football tickets

B1 127.
The first international was... A. England 1–0 Scotland · B. Scotland 0–0 England · C. England 4–1 Scotland

B1 128.
St Andrew's Day is on... A. Sun, Nov 29 · B. Fri, Nov 27 · C. Mon, Nov 30

C READING Compréhension

Tom is a teacher in Manchester. On Monday, November 16, his class is reading about Black Friday. “The sales started in October,” he says. “And Black Friday is on November 27.” The class asks: “Is a bargain always a bargain?” “No,” says Tom. “Check the price first. Which? found no product at its cheapest price on the day.” Then Tom opens the second story: “On Sunday, Advent begins.” The children smile – Tom is holding an advent calendar with 24 little doors.

B1 129.
Tom is... A. a student · B. a teacher in Manchester · C. a reporter

B1 130.
The sales started in... A. October · B. December · C. January

B1 131.
Tom is holding... A. a turkey · B. a football · C. an advent calendar

B1 132.
Tom's class is reading about... A. the Ashes · B. Black Friday · C. the film

D SENTENCES Phrases à former

B1 133.
Will future: “The shops (open) early on Friday.”→ ___

B1 134.
Past simple: “The sales (start) in October.”→ ___

B1 135.
Comparative: “£100 is ___ than £5.”

B2 136.
Whether: “Nobody knows ___ the price will fall.”

E TRANSLATION Traduction

B2 137.
Traduis: “Black Friday is on November 27.”

B2 138.
Traduis: “Advent begins on November 29.”

B2 139.
Traduis: “A budget is a plan, not a present.”

B1 140.
Traduis: “In the jungle, a star is a meal.”

F WORDS Mots à associer

A2 141–144. Associez

141. a bargain
142. a budget
143. a trial
144. a draw

a. a game that ends with the same score
b. a thing bought for less than usual
c. the government's plan for the year
d. a challenge that wins food

G DIALOGUE À compléter

– Two tickets for Zootropolis 2, please. – Which (145)__? – The front row, please. – Here you are. Is this the (146)__ about Judy and Nick? – Yes, the rabbit and the fox. – One large (147)__ and two drinks, please. – What time is the next (148)__? – At eight. – And the film opens on (149)__, November 26? – Yes, Thursday. Enjoy the film!

Levels: 145–149 [A2]

H WRITING Écriture [B1]

Write a short text (80 to 100 words): “My Friday, November 27”. Tell us: did you go shopping, what did you buy, what did you watch on television, what did you read about the Budget – and one sentence about the film on Saturday. The best texts will appear in VOL.6 (page 7, “Readers' Corner”).

Écris un court texte en anglais (80 à 100 mots) : « My Friday, November 27 ». Raconte : es-tu allé faire les magasins ? Qu'as-tu acheté ? Qu'as-tu regardé à la télévision le soir ? Qu'as-tu lu sur le budget ? Et ajoute une phrase sur le film du samedi.



The Main Reading Room, Library of Congress – Carol M. Highsmith, public domain.

MODEL Texte modèle

On Friday, November 27, I went shopping with my mother. The shops opened early, and the streets were full. I bought a book for £5 – a real bargain! In the evening, we watched the jungle on television together with my family. On Saturday, we will watch the new Wicked film. On Sunday, Advent begins, and we will light the first candle. I read about the Budget in class: the government gives £100 to help with winter bills. It is a busy week of sales, films and stories – and I am learning to say it all in English.

ANSWERS Toutes les réponses commentées (pages 1 à 8)

– Page 1 –

1. Friday (vendredi) · 2. Monday (lundi) · 3. sales (sales = soldes) · 4. cheapest (le moins cher) · 5. 100 (100 livres) · 6. bargain · 7. B · 8. A · 9. C (Douze jours de Black Friday Week chez Amazon) · 10. B

– Page 2 –

11. 29 (29 novembre) · 12. Friday (Noël tombe un vendredi) · 13. Monday (La Saint-André tombe un lundi) · 14. 3 (3 novembre) · 15. 1800 (l'année 1800) · 16. Families will light the first candle on Sunday. · 17. Christmas will come in four weeks. · 18. We will open the calendar on December 1. · 19. Will they watch the advert again? · 20. B · 21. C (L'arbre était posé sur une table) · 22. A · 23. B (Jour férié bancaire en Écosse) · 24. b · 25. d · 26. c · 27. a (saint = saint a)

– Page 3 –

28. B · 29. A · 30. C · 31. B · 32. A (Ke Huy Quan double le serpent) · 33. C · 34. opens · 35. fox (fox = renard) · 36. won (win→ won) · 37. points (point = point) · 38. b (witch = sorcière b) · 39. d · 40. c · 41. a · 42. The first film took more than $750 million. · 43. Baum published the book in 1900. · 44. Will Best left the show on Sunday. · 45. The first Zootropolis film won an Oscar. (win→ won)

– Page 4 –

46. B · 47. C · 48. A · 49. B · 50. C · 51. A · 52. derby · 53. final (final = finale) · 54. beaten · 55. draw (draw = match nul) · 56. d (derby = derby d) · 57. c (final = finale c) · 58. a · 59. b (draw = match nul b) · 60. England beat Australia 45–22. · 61. Scotland played England in 1872. · 62. About 4,000 people watched the game. · 63. Sinner missed the ATP Finals.

– Page 5 –

64. B · 65. A · 66. C (Le camp se trouve en Nouvelle-Galles du Sud) · 67. B (Onze campeurs la première nuit) · 68. A (Une étoile, c'est un repas) · 69. C (Un jour plus tard à cause du match de l'Angleterre) · 70. jungle · 71. stars (star = étoile) · 72. vote (vote = voter) · 73. arrive · 74. b · 75. c · 76. d (star = étoile d) · 77. a · 78. The campmates are living in the jungle. · 79. Ant and Dec are presenting the show. · 80. The public is voting every night. · 81. They are cooking rice for the camp.

– Page 6 –

82. B (Le budget a été présenté le 28 octobre) · 83. A (Aide énergie : 100 livres) · 84. C (La baisse de la taxe sur le carburant court jusqu'en juillet 2027) · 85. B (La taxe bancaire dure 15 mois) · 86. A (Le projet de budget gallois, le 17 novembre) · 87. C (L'Écosse fixe ses taux d'imposition le 3 décembre) · 88. B (Un budget est un plan pour l'année) · 89. A (Pas de hausse d'impôts pour les travailleurs) · 90. C · 91. B · 92. A · 93. C · 94. budget · 95. keep (keep = tenir) · 96. until (until = jusqu'à) · 97. debates · 98. arrives · 99. raises

– Page 7 –

100. bargain · 101. more · 102. less · 103. will · 104. started · 105. whether · 106. chose · 107. opens · 108. Correct: The sales are starting early. (sales est pluriel : are) · 109. Correct: A bargain is a good price. (Singulier : is) · 110. Correct: £100 is more than £5. (more than, structure) · 111. Correct: Nobody knows whether the sales will end. (whether introduit une subordonnée)

– Page 8 –

112. Thursday (Jeudi 26 novembre) · 113. writes (writes, 3e personne) · 114. last (last, présent) · 115. started (started, passé) · 116. writes (writes, 3e personne) · 117. change (change, présent) · 118. lights (lights, 3e personne) · 119. sends (sends, 3e personne) · 120. B (Douze jours de Black Friday Week chez Amazon) · 121. A (Black Friday, le 27 novembre) · 122. C (Which? a suivi 175 produits) · 123. B (« Zootropolis 2 », 26 novembre) · 124. A (Le premier dimanche de l'Avent, c'est le 29 novembre) · 125. B (La finale du Nations Championship, le 29 novembre) · 126. A (Aide énergie : 100 livres) · 127. B (Le premier match international s'est terminé 0-0) · 128. C (La Saint-André, le 30 novembre) · 129. B (Tom enseigne à Manchester) · 130. A (Les soldes ont commencé en octobre) · 131. C (Tom tient un calendrier de l'Avent) · 132. B (La classe de Tom lit un texte sur le Black Friday) · 133. The shops will open early on Friday. (will + verbe à l'infinitif) · 134. The sales started in October. (start→ started) · 135. more (more than, comparatif) · 136. whether (whether = si) · 137. Le Black Friday, c'est le 27 novembre. (Black Friday = Vendredi noir) · 138. L'Avent commence le 29 novembre. (Advent = Avent) · 139. Un budget est un plan, pas un cadeau. (budget = budget) · 140. Dans la jungle, une étoile, c'est un repas. (a star = une étoile) · 141. b (bargain = bonne affaire b) · 142. c (budget = budget c) · 143. d (trial = épreuve d) · 144. a (draw = match nul a) · 145. row (row = une rangée) · 146. film (film = un film) · 147. popcorn (popcorn = du pop-corn) · 148. show (show = une séance) · 149. Thursday (Thursday = jeudi) · 150. Tâche ouverte – points dans le cadre d'écriture ; texte modèle dans le cadre de cette page (Noté sur les points)