

## Uses of "it"

### 1. Impersonal pronoun(비인칭 대명사)

"It" is the only impersonal pronoun in English. The following are some of the important uses of "it".

(1) It is used to represent a noun in the neuter gender.

*Don't drink the milk. It smells terrible.*

I am taking the meat back to the shop because it isn't good.

(2) "It" can be used to represent a young baby of either sex.

The baby is crying. It must be hungry.

I did not disturb the child because it was sleeping.

(3) "It" can also be used for small and domestic animals.

I love my dog. It is almost human.

I will not sell my cow because it yields 10 litres of milk every day.

(4) "It" is used as an emphazier before a noun or a pronoun. (it~that 강조형 용법)

It was Susie who(that) painted this picture.

It was the cat that I took care of.

It is a doll that her daughter wants to have.

It was him that Sally fell in love with.

It was last night that they had a party.

It was in the park that she sang.

(5) "It" can be used to refer to a preceding statement.

Jack was maltreated by his uncle; and he could not forget it all his life.

### 2. Special use of "it"

we saw that the word "it" is a third person singular pronoun. However, this word also has other roles which are not related to its pronominal use. We look at some of these other uses here.

이때의 "It" 은 한국말로 해석하지 않으며, 영어 문장에서 주어라 필요하므로 사용한 것으로 생각하면 될 것 같다.

(1) time(시각, 시간, 날자, 요일 등)

**What time is it now?**

**It was sunday yesterday.**

**It is ten.**

**It is eleven twenty.**

**It has been five years since he died.**

**It took longer than we expected.**

**Don't take too long over it.**

**It takes time to get used to new shoes.**

**(2) light and shade(명암)**

**It grew dark. (주변이) 점차 어두어 졌다**

**It is dark in the tunnel**

**It gets dark early in winter.**

**(3) distance(거리)**

**It is ten miles from here to the station.**

**It is about one thousand meters.**

**It is eight miles from here to Seoul.**

**(4) weather(일기)**

**It is going to rain.**

**It is snowing.**

Here, we cannot identify precisely what it refers to. It has a rather vague reference, and we call this dummy IT or prop IT. dummy it is also used, equally vaguely, in other expressions:

**Hold it!**

**Take it easy!**

**Can you make it to my party?**

**3. dummy subject(가주어) and dummy object(가주어 및 가목적어) of "it"**

We also use "it" to introduce or 'anticipate' the subject or object of a sentence, especially when the subject or object of the sentence is "to + infinitive phrase" or "that clauses". We also call this use of "it" a dummy subject(가주어) or dummy object, since the real subject(진주어) real object(진목적어) is "to + infinitive phrase" or "that clause":

**3-1. dummy subject(가주어)**

**It's good that she's doing more exercise. (= That she's doing more exercise is good.)**

**It was nice to talk with them again. (= To talk with them again was nice.)**

**It's quite likely that we shall be late, so please do start without us.**

**It seems they've all lost contact since they met at the wedding.**

**It occurred to me that we might visit them while we are in South Africa.**

It is common with the passive voice. It makes the sentence seem less personal and more objective:

It was decided that we should all swim across the lake before breakfast.

It is accepted that research into cancer has advanced considerably in the last few years.

### 3-2. dummy object(가목적어)

I find it surprising to see so many people here.

She believed it possible to change the plan.

I found it impossible doing homework.

George thought it strange that his name had not been called.

I take it for granted that you will be coming to the meeting.

They believed it impossible that any reasonable person would dare to accept such a challenge.

### 4. "it" subject of a verb such as appear, seem, look, occur

We also use "it" when a clause is the subject of a verb such as appear, seem, look, occur, which hedge or soften the statement, making it less direct:

It seems they've all lost contact since they met at the wedding.

It occurred to me that we might visit them while we are in South Africa.