



## Describing objects

When you describe an object you should focus on the following aspects:

- function/use;
- main components/parts;
- characteristics (material, shape/figure, dimensions).

### Function/use

In order to describe the function/use of an object you can use the following expressions:

*to be used to + verb (base form)*  
or  
*to be used for + verb (-ing form)*

- Ex.** *A transformer is used to increase or decrease the voltage in electric power applications.  
The distribution box is used for distributing the electric supply to sections of the house.*

### Main components/parts

When describing the main components of an object you can say:

*it consists of – it is made up of – it is composed of – it includes*

- Ex.** *A distribution box consists of a main switch, a trip switch and circuit breakers.  
Output devices include a monitor, speakers and a printer.*

If the objects to be described consist of many parts or appear in a set, positions must be given. The following are some of the main expressions used to describe position:

*inside/outside – at the top/bottom – on the left/right – in the middle – over – between  
– at the front/back*

- Ex.** *The toolbar at the bottom of the screen has disappeared.  
Circuits can be found inside any electronic device.*

Sometimes it is also necessary to describe how the different parts of an object are connected or fit together. Verbs to express connection are:

*attach/detach – connect – join – support – fix – fit – to be mounted on*

- Ex.** *The webcam was mounted on top of the display.*

### Characteristics

Now let's see how to describe the main characteristics of an object.

As for the material, two constructions are possible:

*it is made of + name of the material*  
or  
*it is a wooden/glass/metal/plastic/stone/cloth, etc. + name of the object*

Here are some adjectives that may be useful when describing the shape of an object:

*square – rectangular – circular – elliptical – cubic – cylindrical*

- Ex.** *It is circular in shape. – It is shaped like a square.*

Dimensions include length, width, height, depth and thickness.

- Ex.** *A fuse is an electrical component made of a short thin wire of lead and tin alloy.  
My laptop is 35 cm long.*



**ACTIVITIES**

1 Complete the description with the words given.  
plastic – shape – keys – held – model – white – fit

**Smartphones**

A smartphone has a rectangular ..... 1 and it is rather thin and lightweight. It can be ..... 2 in your hand and can ..... 3 in a pocket. Smartphone screens vary depending on the manufacturer and ..... 4. The screen size may vary from 4.7" to 5.2".

Most smartphones have got ..... 5 shells with a metallic finish.

Smartphones are provided with an on-screen touch keyboard. Some smartphones feature a slide-out keyboard with actual ..... 6 to press.

Black and ..... 7 are the most popular colours for smartphones, but nowadays you can find smartphones in green, blue, red, rose gold colours.

2 Describe the objects in the photos below.

