VOCABULARY

On the motorway

How many hours have you spent stuck on a motorway this summer?
ANNA HOCHSIEDE presents language to talk about this topic.

**Motorways in the UK**

Britain’s first motorway was not the M1, as people might think, but the M6 — or rather, an eight-mile stretch of it, the Preston Bypass, which opened in 1958. The M1 opened the following year. Linking London and Leeds, it was Britain’s first full-length interurban motorway. The first service area, Watford Gap Services, between Junctions 16 and 17, opened at the same time.

Britain’s most famous motorway is probably the M25. It forms a large circle round London. It is 117 miles in length and is Europe’s second-longest ring road, surpassed only by the Berlin Ring. Notorious for its frequent traffic jams, the M25 is one of Europe’s most congested motorways. Traffic is particularly heavy during the summer holidays, when families with school-age children also hit the road.

If you are planning to drive in Britain this summer, remember that the speed limit on motorways is 70 miles (just under 113 kilometres) per hour. All British motorways are toll-free, with one exception: you have to pay for a 27-mile stretch of the M6 north of Birmingham.
PRACTICE
Now, try the following exercises to practise talking about motorways.

Exercise 1
Complete the tables below with the correct British and American English words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British English</th>
<th>American English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. ................... ramp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. service area</td>
<td>..........................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. ................... gas station</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. hard shoulder</td>
<td>..........................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. ................... parking lot</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 2
Complete the sentences below with the nouns from the list.

carriageway | hard shoulder | junction | lane | roadworks

A. Slow down! We have to get out at the next ................... .
B. There’s a traffic jam on the northbound ................... of the M1.
C. I was stuck behind a lorry in the slow ................... all the way to Bristol.
D. We had to pull over on to the ................... and call a tow truck.
E. That sign says there are ................... ahead for the next five miles.

Exercise 3
Complete the sentences below with words from the text on the opposite page.

A. I wish they would introduce a(n) ................... on German motorways.
B. You have to pay a(n) ................... on some, but not all, French motorways.
C. The M25 is always ................... on Fridays.
D. I spent the final ten-mile ................... of the M5 stuck in a traffic jam.
E. We’re planning to ................... the road at around six in the morning.

What type of road?
Note the difference between a street and a road. A “street” is found in a city, town or village and has buildings along it. “Road” is a more general word. It is used for the routes connecting cities, towns or villages.

A motorway is called a freeway or highway in American English. It has several lanes in each direction. The word lane can also refer to a narrow country road or a narrow street with buildings along both sides.

Motorways in Britain all have an M and a number as their name. A-roads are not as large as motorways, but wider and straighter than B-roads.

A bypass is a road that goes round a city rather than through its centre, whereas an expressway (in the US) allows traffic to travel fast through cities or built-up areas.

Answers
1. A. slip road  B. petrol station  C. car park  D. breakdown lane  E. car park
2. A. junction  B. carriageway  C. hard shoulder  D. roadworks  E. stretch
3. A. speed limit  B. toll  C. congested  D. stretch  E. hit
4. A. junction  B. carriageway  C. hard shoulder  D. roadworks  E. stretch
5. A. slip road  B. petrol station  C. car park  D. breakdown lane  E. car park
6. A. ramp  B. service area  C. gas station  D. hard shoulder  E. parking lot