

# Inversion in English

Practice Worksheet • B2 First / C1 Advanced • with Answer Key

**Student instructions:** Complete the exercises below. Pay attention to word order, auxiliary verbs, and punctuation. Use full forms unless the exercise clearly invites a shorter answer.

## Quick reference

Type	Starter	Pattern	Example
Question	Auxiliary first	Aux + subject + verb	Have you finished?
Conditional	should / were / had	No if-clause	Had I known, ...
Negative opener	never / rarely / not only	Inversion after opener	Never have I seen ...
Only-phrase	only then / only if	Inversion in main clause	Only then did she speak.

## Exercise 1. Choose the correct option

Circle or underline the correct answer.

1. Never (I have seen / have I seen) such a dramatic ending to a film.
2. (Had / Did) she known about the delay, she would have left earlier.
3. Only then (she realised / did she realise) how serious the problem was.
4. No sooner had we sat down (when / than) the lights went out.
5. So difficult (the test was / was the test) that half the class gave up.
6. Rarely (they discuss / do they discuss) politics at dinner.
7. (Should / Would) you need any further information, please contact us.
8. Only if everyone agrees (we can start / can we start) the project.
9. May (you always be / always you be) happy and healthy.
10. Only Sarah understood the question. In this sentence, inversion is (required / not required).

## Exercise 2. Rewrite the sentences using inversion

Begin each new sentence with the word or phrase given.

1. If I had known the answer, I would have told you. (Had) \_\_\_\_\_
2. If he were to apologise, she might forgive him. (Were) \_\_\_\_\_
3. If you need any help, call me. (Should) \_\_\_\_\_
4. I had hardly closed my eyes when the baby started crying. (Hardly) \_\_\_\_\_
5. She realised the truth only later. (Only later) \_\_\_\_\_
6. We will succeed only in this way. (Only in this way) \_\_\_\_\_
7. I have never heard such a ridiculous excuse. (Never) \_\_\_\_\_
8. The weather was so hot that nobody wanted to leave the shade. (So) \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 3. Correct the mistakes

Each sentence contains one mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. Never I have met anyone so stubborn. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Only when the meeting ended she checked her phone. \_\_\_\_\_
3. No sooner had he arrived when everyone started asking questions. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Should it rains tomorrow, the match will be cancelled. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Only my brother did understand the joke. \_\_\_\_\_
6. So tired was she, that she fell asleep on the sofa. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Rarely they go out during the week. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Had I knew about the traffic, I would have taken the train. \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 4. Complete each sentence with one word

Write one suitable word in each gap.

1. Little \_\_\_\_ I know that the decision would change my life.
2. No sooner had the lecture begun \_\_\_\_ the fire alarm went off.
3. Only by working together \_\_\_\_ we solve the problem.
4. Seldom \_\_\_\_ I felt so relieved.
5. \_\_\_\_ you require any assistance, please let us know.
6. Not until midnight \_\_\_\_ they finally get home.

7. Hardly had she opened the door \_\_\_\_\_ the dog ran outside.
8. Such \_\_\_\_\_ his enthusiasm that everyone wanted to join the project.
9. May your journey \_\_\_\_\_ safe and pleasant.
10. Only then \_\_\_\_\_ he admit that he had been wrong.

### Exercise 5. Match the sentence halves

Write the correct letter next to each number.

Sentence beginning	Ending
1. Not only did she apologise,	A. that the audience sat in complete silence.
2. Only after the interview	B. should this door be left unlocked.
3. Had they left earlier,	C. did he feel slightly more confident.
4. So powerful was the speech	D. but she also offered to pay for the damage.
5. On no account	E. will we go for a walk by the coast.
6. Only if the weather improves	F. they would have caught the earlier train.

Answers: 1 \_\_ 2 \_\_ 3 \_\_ 4 \_\_ 5 \_\_ 6 \_\_

### Exercise 6. Transform the sentences

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning. Use between two and five words.

1. I realised what he meant only then.  
Only then \_\_\_\_\_ what he meant.
2. If you should see Anna, tell her to ring me.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Anna, tell her to ring me.
3. I had barely sat down when the manager called me in.  
Barely \_\_\_\_\_ the manager called me in.
4. The mistake was so serious that the company issued a public apology.  
So serious \_\_\_\_\_ a public apology.
5. We can solve this problem only by remaining calm.  
Only by remaining calm \_\_\_\_\_ this problem.
6. I had never before tasted such delicious homemade bread.  
Never before \_\_\_\_\_ such delicious homemade bread.

## Exercise 7. Writing challenge

Write five original sentences. Use a different type of inversion in each one.

- a question
- an inverted conditional with had / were / should
- a sentence beginning with a negative adverbial
- a sentence beginning with only
- a wish with may

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Answer Key

Teacher's copy

## Exercise 1

1. have I seen
2. Had
3. did she realise
4. than
5. was the test
6. do they discuss
7. Should
8. can we start
9. you always be
10. not required

## Exercise 2

1. Had I known the answer, I would have told you.
2. Were he to apologise, she might forgive him. / Were he to apologize, ...
3. Should you need any help, call me.
4. Hardly had I closed my eyes when the baby started crying.
5. Only later did she realise the truth.
6. Only in this way will we succeed. / Only in this way can we succeed.
7. Never have I heard such a ridiculous excuse.
8. So hot was the weather that nobody wanted to leave the shade.

## Exercise 3

1. Never have I met anyone so stubborn.
2. Only when the meeting ended did she check her phone.
3. No sooner had he arrived than everyone started asking questions.
4. Should it rain tomorrow, the match will be cancelled.
5. Only my brother understood the joke.
6. So tired was she that she fell asleep on the sofa.

7. Rarely do they go out during the week.
8. Had I known about the traffic, I would have taken the train.

#### **Exercise 4**

1. did
2. than
3. can
4. have
5. Should
6. did
7. when
8. was
9. be
10. did

#### **Exercise 5**

- 1 D
- 2 C
- 3 F
- 4 A
- 5 B
- 6 E

#### **Exercise 6**

1. did I realise
2. Should you see
3. had I sat down when
4. was the mistake that the company issued
5. can we solve
6. have I tasted

Writing challenge: Answers will vary.