**LIFTS**

to lift:

He lifted his [trophy](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/trophy#trophy__2) over his head.

The paramedics lifted the stretcher into the ambulance.

He lifted his foot from the gas pedal.

He lifted his pen from the paper.

She lifted her hands to the sky.

A [helicopter](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/helicopter#helicopter__2) lifted 11 crew to safety from the ship

Suddenly his heart lifted and he could have [wept](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/weep#weep__3) with relief.

Idiom: lift a finger (or hand) Make the slightest effort to do something, especially to help someone: he never lifted a finger to get [*Jimmy*](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/Jimmy#Jimmy__2) released from prison.

elevator –

to elevate:

Do you like elevators?

What do you know (or can guess) about the history of elevators?

How often do you use elevators?

Which do you prefer, elevators or escalators?

What do you do when you ride in an elevator?

Are your thoughts and feelings different when you are in an elevator alone and when there are other people in it?

What things do you look at while the elevator is going up or down?

Why do people keep pressing the button to call the elevator, even though that doesn’t make the elevator come quicker?

Do you have a favourite or least liked elevator?

Do you always try to squeeze in even if the elevator looks full?

Do you ever take the stairs?

Do you ever worry about going into an elevator?

What do you think of the music in elevators?

Do you think all elevators should have a mirror?

Have you ever got out of an elevator on the wrong floor?

Have you ever been unable to control or stop your laughter in an elevator?

What improvements do you think could be made to elevators?

Would you like an elevator in your house?

Have you ever had a bad experience in an elevator?

Do you prefer the word ‘lift’ or ‘elevator’? Why?

**Going up? How awkward is a ride in a lift?**

The everyday lift – or elevator – is a very useful invention with a fascinating history. But it has led to some modern day irritations for people who use them. Rob and Neil discuss awkwardness in lifts and what can be done to overcome it. They'll also be teaching some related vocabulary and phrases.

1. What is today’s question?
2. What is Neil’s answer?
3. On which floor did rich people use to live before the invention of lifts?
4. Who invented the first lift?
5. What were some examples of uses of lifts?
6. How were lifts operated in history?
7. Why did Neil feel uneasy in the lift that morning?
8. What do people usually do in an elevator?
9. What does awkwardness mean?
10. How do most lifts mark the 13th floor?
11. What technology can be used in a lift to help people feel better?
12. What is Muzak?
13. Which country has the biggest number of lifts?

Rob: Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm Rob…

Neil: … and I'm Neil. Hello.

Rob: I'd like to start by asking how did you get up here to the studio - on to the sixth floor - this morning?

Neil: Well, by lift, of course.

Rob: I thought so. That’s what we’re going to talk about in this programme - lifts. Or elevators, as Americans call them.

Neil: Lifts? That's not very exciting, is it? What’s there to say about lifts, Rob? I mean they take you up and down and that’s it really.

Rob: Well, you're in for a surprise, Neil – but first let's see if you can answer this question:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

a) The USA?

b) Italy?

or c) China?

Neil: Well, it seems obvious to me because of the massive expansion in its construction industry, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Rob: Okay. Well, we'll find out if you're right or wrong later on. But now, let's elevate – or raise – your knowledge about lifts. This invention has had quite an effect on which floor people choose to live on.

Neil: Well, I suppose before the days of lifts rich people lived \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and poorer people lived \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and had to use the stairs. Now though it's the other way round – and that, in turn, has given rise to penthouses with their fantastic views.

Rob: And the history of lifts goes back a long way. It was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who invented the first lift in 236BC. In the Middle Ages there were examples of lifts being used for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Then they helped to move \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ around. They really came into their own – or became very useful - in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Neil: And there was a wide range of methods used to drive them, too – pulleys, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and so on. Today, tall blocks of flats couldn't exist without them. And you're right, Rob, there's more to lifts than meets the eye.

Rob: There certainly is. But have you noticed how nobody says anything in a lift? Have you ever felt uneasy in a lift, Neil?

Neil: Actually yes, I have. Just this morning \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Rob: Yes, it's a strange one, isn't it? Well, let's listen to Jason Whale, sales manager at Elevators Ltd, talking about this subject. He thinks he may have found a solution to the problem. He uses a word that describes the state of feeling strange or uneasy. Can you tell me what it is?

*Jason Whale, sales manager at Elevators Ltd*  
It's a very anxious experience the time you spend in a lift. I think everyone behaves very differently and awkwardly in a lift. If you have things around you, you take away that awkwardness. We all \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Well, surely it's better to look at advertisements on the walls…

Neil: He said awkwardness, which describes the state of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. He suggests that advertisements in lifts could improve our experience of being in one. I suppose that could mean moving, digital ads.

Rob: It could, but before we consider that further, let's delve into lifts a little more. Of course there's always the danger of getting stuck in one – but thankfully that's rare and usually you can dial an emergency number and be rescued.

Neil: And did you know that most lifts mark the 13th floor as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_or something similar because 13 is considered an unlucky number? By the way, have you heard of the elevator pitch?

Rob: Yes, I have Neil. It's something we can do when we're stuck in a lift with someone.

Neil: Yes - people say that if you have an idea or product to sell you should be able to sell it – or pitch it – to someone quickly. So in other words, in the time it takes for an elevator – or lift - to reach the top of a building.

Rob: It's a good idea if the lift doesn't break down! Let's get back to the thought that digital advertising can make travelling by lift a more pleasant experience.  Let's hear from Jason Whale again. He uses a word that means "thinner". Can you spot it?

*Jason Whale, sales manager at Elevators Ltd*I think, with all things, as technology becomes both slimmer and also cheaper as well, it becomes much more attractive to people who purchase lifts and therefore there are so many different ways to enhance a lift with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_it becomes quite exciting for us, and hopefully a little bit more interesting for the people who use lifts every day.

Neil: He said slimmer which means thinner.

Rob: And he said enhance, which means improve. Well, he could be on to something. Looking at moving advertisements must be better than listening to Muzak– \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Neil: Oh, that's terrible! I hate Muzak!

Rob: OK. So Neil, do you remember the question I asked you at the beginning of the programme? I asked you which country has the most lifts? Is it...

a) The USA?

b) Italy?

or c) China?

Neil: And I said c) of course. It must be, it has to be China!

Rob: Really? You sound so sure... but in fact you're wrong. The answer is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Does that surprise you?

Neil: Yeah. It astonishes me to be honest.

Rob: All these old buildings that have got lifts in…

Neil: I wonder why.

Rob: Well, before we go, it's time to remind ourselves of some of the vocabulary that we've heard today. Neil.