

LEARN ENGLISH WITH MUSIC

Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go

Wham!

COMPLETE LEARNING WORKBOOK

Go beyond the song

Retro dance culture, relationship anxiety and high-energy imperatives.

17 verified learning cards / Level B1 / guided practice

SECTION 00

Your learning journey

Watch first, explore second, practise from memory and finish with the complete card library.

1 WATCH	Follow the official lyric video and synced cards.
2 EXPLORE	Study language, extended vocabulary, culture and sound.
3 PRACTISE	Complete the guided challenges without looking back.
4 REVIEW	Use the final 17-card library by category.

Three sources of value

Song language gives you patterns to reuse. **Extended vocabulary** helps you discuss the themes and music. **Context** helps you understand cultural references and form your own interpretation.

Lyrics on video

[Open the lyric video used for this lesson](#)

Listen, read and return to the workbook whenever you want to explore a language point in greater depth.

SECTION 01

Map the song

See how movement verbs convert a fear of exclusion into a dance invitation.

STAGE	LEARNING LENS
Opening	Identify the speaker, situation and first useful pattern.
Development	Track the main contrast, image or relationship problem.
Hook	Notice how repetition changes emphasis and memory.
Late return	Retrieve earlier language under new vocal or narrative pressure.

Listening challenge

For each stage, write one word for the sound and one for the speaker's emotional position. Then explain which language choice helped create that impression.

SECTION 02

Language Lab

Move beyond the quick cards: compare structures, notice register and learn how to avoid common mistakes.

LANGUAGE POINT	GO DEEPER	USE IT WELL
leave someone doing	Leave + object + -ing focuses on the continuing state after departure. Leave + object + adjective names a resulting condition.	They left me waiting. The news left me confused.
plan to vs plan on	Plan to takes a base verb; plan on takes -ing and often sounds more conversational.	I plan to travel. I plan on travelling.
before and by	Before means earlier than an event; by means no later than a deadline.	Call before you leave. Finish by six.
sound symbolism	Boom, bang and similar words imitate sound. They can function as nouns, verbs or interjections.	Punctuation and sentence position help reveal the role.

SECTION 03

Extended vocabulary: go beyond the lyrics

This bonus language expands what you can say about the narrative, emotion, performance and production.

wake-up call	noun	A call or event designed to wake someone up - literally, or as a warning that pushes someone to change. <i>Missing the flight was a wake-up call to start packing the night before.</i>
to doze off	phrasal verb	To fall asleep without meaning to, usually for a short time. <i>He dozed off on the sofa halfway through the film.</i>
groggy	adjective	Dazed and slow-moving, especially just after waking up. <i>I'm always groggy until I've had my first coffee.</i>
to snooze	verb	To sleep lightly for a short while, or to delay an alarm by a few minutes. <i>She hit snooze three times before finally getting up.</i>
bubblegum pop	noun	A style of upbeat, catchy, unashamedly cheerful pop music aimed at a young, mainstream audience. <i>Their early singles were pure bubblegum pop - three minutes of pure sugar.</i>
catchy	adjective	Describes a tune that is easy to remember and gets stuck in your head. <i>The jingle was so catchy I was humming it for days.</i>
to get ready	phrasal verb	To prepare yourself, especially before going out somewhere. <i>It takes my sister an hour to get ready before a night out.</i>
outfit	noun	A complete set of clothes worn together for a particular occasion. <i>She tried on four outfits before settling on the red dress.</i>
to psych someone up	phrasal verb	To get someone mentally excited and ready for something. <i>The coach psyched the team up before they walked onto the pitch.</i>
early bird	noun	A person who naturally wakes up early and is at their best in the morning. <i>My dad's an early bird - he's up and jogging by six.</i>
night owl	noun	A person who prefers staying up late and feels more energetic at night. <i>As a night owl, she does her best writing after midnight.</i>
all-nighter	noun	A period of staying awake all night, usually to work, study or party. <i>We pulled an all-nighter finishing the project before the deadline.</i>

SECTION 04

Idioms and expressive English

Use these additional expressions to discuss the song's situations and themes in natural English.

to hit the town	extension	To go out into the city at night to enjoy yourself, often dancing or drinking. <i>It's Friday - let's get dressed up and hit the town.</i>
rise and shine	extension	A cheerful, energetic way of telling someone it's time to wake up. <i>Rise and shine! The taxi's arriving in twenty minutes.</i>
up and about	extension	Awake, out of bed and moving around after sleeping or being ill. <i>She was up and about again just two days after the flu.</i>
to be raring to go	extension	To be extremely eager and full of energy to start something. <i>By 7 a.m. the kids were already raring to go for the theme park.</i>
to burn the candle at both ends	extension	To exhaust yourself by going to bed late and getting up early, often through work or partying. <i>Between the night shifts and the early classes, he was burning the candle at both ends.</i>

Make the language yours

Complete the exercises later in the workbook to check meaning, structure and register.

SECTION 05

Pronunciation as performance

A sung voice is not a neutral accent sample. Listen for concrete features, then compare theatrical delivery with everyday speech.

Non-rhotic R	In this classic British pop delivery, the r after a vowel simply disappears - 'before' and 'morning' lose their r-sound entirely, unlike the hard American r. Listen for the open, r-less vowel at the end of 'before'.
Glottal-stopped T (Estuary flavour)	London-area British speech often swaps a clear t for a small catch in the throat - 'little' and 'night' can sound closer to 'li'l' and 'nigh'', a feature typical of the Estuary English George Michael grew up around.
Clipped, rhythmic function words	To keep the uptempo groove tight, small grammar words get compressed and punched out fast - 'you're' and 'gonna' are barely held at all, driving the song's relentless forward energy.
The British 'goat' vowel	Words built around 'go' use a tighter, more rounded starting vowel than the American diphthong - it's part of what gives the title's repeated 'go' its bright, bouncy British colour rather than a drawled US one.

Three-pass shadowing

1. Tap only the stressed beats.
2. Reproduce the phrase slowly and clearly.
3. Contrast a natural spoken version with the musical performance.

SECTION 06

Context and creative choices

Discover the cultural and creative decisions that shaped the song, then listen again with this context in mind.

Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go was written and produced entirely by George Michael, who recorded it in 1984 at Sarm West Studio 2 in London with a live rhythm section, reportedly finishing the track in only a couple of days. It was released as a single in the UK on 14 May 1984, serving as the lead single from Wham!'s second studio album, *Make It Big*.

The song's chart run was fast and decisive: it entered the UK Singles Chart at number four and climbed to number one within a week, holding the top spot for two weeks - Wham!'s first ever UK chart-topper. Six months later it repeated the feat across the Atlantic, spending three weeks at number one on the US Billboard Hot 100 in November 1984, giving the duo their first American number one and completing a rare same-year double for a British act.

Commercially, the single was certified Platinum by the RIAA in the United States and Gold by the BPI in the UK, and it topped the charts in several other countries, including Australia, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Sweden and Iceland. At the 1985 Grammy Awards it was nominated for Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocals, though the award ultimately went to the Pointer Sisters for 'Jump (For My Love).'

The accompanying music video, directed by Andy Morahan, was filmed with a crowd of teenage extras at Brixton Academy in South London. George Michael and Andrew Ridgeley performed in oversized 'CHOOSE LIFE' T-shirts designed by British fashion designer Katharine Hamnett, and the look became one of the most imitated fashion statements of the decade, later revisited in VH1's *I Love the 80s*.

The title itself has a small, almost accidental origin story: George Michael said he was inspired by a note Andrew Ridgeley had scribbled for his parents, which was meant to read 'wake me up before you go' but accidentally repeated the word 'up.' Rather than cross it out, Ridgeley deliberately doubled the word 'go' as well, and Michael turned the quirky repetition into the song's title and hook.

More than four decades later, the track still holds its place in 80s pop history - VH1 ranked it number 28 on its list of the 100 Greatest Songs of the '80s, and it remains a fixture of retro radio and throwback dance floors. In this catalogue it plays the role of pure high-energy British pop: all bright synths and breathless pace, a sharp contrast to the slower, more introspective British ballads sitting alongside it.

SECTION 07

Practice zone

Complete every activity without looking back, then use the answer key to correct your work independently.

A. Extended vocabulary in context

1. Choose the best term for this meaning: *A call or event designed to wake someone up - literally, or as a warning that pushes someone to change.*

wake-up call / to doze off

2. Choose the best term for this meaning: *To fall asleep without meaning to, usually for a short time.*

to doze off / groggy

3. Choose the best term for this meaning: *Dazed and slow-moving, especially just after waking up.*

groggy / to snooze

4. Choose the best term for this meaning: *To sleep lightly for a short while, or to delay an alarm by a few minutes.*

to snooze / bubblegum pop

5. Choose the best term for this meaning: *A style of upbeat, catchy, unashamedly cheerful pop music aimed at a young, mainstream audience.*

bubblegum pop / catchy

6. Choose the best term for this meaning: *Describes a tune that is easy to remember and gets stuck in your head.*

catchy / wake-up call

B. Retrieve the expression

7. Which expression matches this meaning: *To go out into the city at night to enjoy yourself, often dancing or drinking.?*

8. Which expression matches this meaning: *A cheerful, energetic way of telling someone it's time to wake up.?*

9. Which expression matches this meaning: *Awake, out of bed and moving around after sleeping or being ill.?*

10. Which expression matches this meaning: *To be extremely eager and full of energy to start something.?*

C. Accuracy check

11. Correct the form: **I listened the song carefully.**

12. Choose the careful form: **The contrast lead to a new meaning / leads to a new meaning.**

SECTION 08

Answer key

Check each answer and return to the Language Lab when a form or distinction is still unclear.

1. wake-up call
2. to doze off
3. groggy
4. to snooze
5. bubblegum pop
6. catchy
7. to hit the town
8. rise and shine
9. up and about
10. to be raring to go
11. I listened to the song carefully
12. The contrast leads to a new meaning

Review again

Cover the answers and repeat the activities after a few days. A delayed second attempt is a better test of learning than immediate rereading.

SECTION 09

Complete 17-card library

Use this compact summary for quick revision or return to the video cue when you want to hear a point again.

Vocabulary / 3 cards

VOCABULARY / VIDEO 0:24

sky-high

Sky-high means extremely high. It can describe prices, confidence or emotion; here it intensifies excitement.

VOCABULARY / VIDEO 0:42

best friend

Best is the superlative of good. A possessive normally comes before it: my best friend, not the my best friend.

VOCABULARY / VIDEO 2:39

instead

Instead signals replacement: choose one action rather than another. Instead of requires a noun or -ing form.

Grammar / 7 cards

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 0:33

something is bugging me

Bug someone informally means annoy or worry them. The present continuous makes the concern current.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 0:51

left me sleeping

Leave + object + -ing describes the state or continuing action in which someone was left.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 1:00

do not leave me hanging on

Leave someone hanging means keep them waiting without an answer or support. The object separates leave from the complement.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 1:12

before you go-go

After before, present simple can refer to future time: before you go. English does not normally use will in this time clause.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 1:36

you put the grey skies out of my way

Put + object + prepositional phrase describes movement. Out of my way means no longer obstructing me.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 2:00

I am not planning on going solo

Plan on takes an -ing form. Go solo means act or perform alone.

GRAMMAR / VIDEO 2:27

they can dance

Modal can takes the base form without to. The pronoun they refers back to other people in the social scene.

Idioms / 4 cards

IDIOM / VIDEO 0:15

boom-boom into my heart

Boom-boom imitates a heartbeat. Sound symbolism converts attraction into a physical rhythmic event.

IDIOM / VIDEO 1:24

take me dancing

Take + person + -ing can mean accompany someone for an activity: take me shopping, take us dancing.

IDIOM / VIDEO 1:48

you make the sun shine

Make + object + bare infinitive gives make the sun shine. Figuratively, the person brings happiness.

IDIOM / VIDEO 2:12

move in tight

Move in means come closer; tight adds close physical proximity in the dance context.

Culture / 2 cards

CULTURE / VIDEO 0:00

jitterbug

The jitterbug is an energetic swing dance. The opening word immediately frames the song through retro dance culture.

CULTURE / VIDEO 3:21

closing chorus as dance instruction

The final refrain turns relationship anxiety into communal movement. Repetition allows listeners to participate even with minimal language.

Pronunciation / 1 cards

PHONETICS / VIDEO 2:57

go-go: reduplication

Repeating go creates a playful rhythmic hook rather than a standard grammatical repetition. It also echoes the 1960s term go-go dancing.

Keep learning

[Return to the synced learning experience.](#)