***There is (are/was/were/will be) and* *It is (was/will be)***

We normally use ***there*** to show a place or location. We then use ***it (***or ***they)*** to refer back to the original thing or situation.

A big ship is over ***there***. ***It*** came from Denmark.

The conference was in a hotel. 100 people stayed ***there***. ***They*** came ***there*** from all over the world.

100 ships are sailing ***there***. ***They*** came from Denmark. (Note that we use “they” for things as well as people.)

***But “there” and “it” are also used in a number of other, less obvious ways.***

**THERE**

We use **there** as the subject of the sentence with a “be” verb followed by another noun.

* To **introduce** a **new topic**:
  + **There is** a meeting this evening. It will start at seven.
  + **There has been** an accident. I hope no one is hurt.
* To say **where** something is/was:
  + **There used to be** a playground at the end of the street.
  + **There are** fairies in our garden.
  + I wonder if **there will be** anyone at home.
* With **numbers** or **quantities**:
  + **There was 1” of** rain last night.
  + **There must have been more than five hundred** in the audience.
  + **There isn’t much daylight here in the winter.**
* With an **indefinite pronoun**or expressions of **quantity** and the **to**-infinitive:
  + **There is** nothing to do in the village.
  + **There was** plenty to read in the apartment.
  + **There was** nothing to watch on television.
  + **There is** a lot of work to do.
  + If we want to show the subject of the **to**-infinitive we use **for**:
* **There is nothing** for the children **to do** in the village.
* **There was plenty** for us **to read** in the apartment.
* **There was nothing** for them **to watch** on television.
* **There is a lot** of work for you **to do**.
* With an **indefinite pronoun**or expressions of **quantity** and an **-ing** verb:
  + **There is** someone waiting for you.
  + **There were** a lot of people shouting and waving.

We use a **singular** verb if the **noun phrase is singular**:

* There **is** a meeting this evening. It will start at seven.
* There **was** a lot of rain last night.
* **Is** there any rain on the street?
* There **is** someone waiting to see you.

We use a **plural** verb if the **noun phrase is plural**:

* There **are** twenty people waiting to see you.
* There **were** some cookies in the cupboard.
* There **were** a lot of people shouting and waving.

**It**

We often use ***It is*** (or, more often, the contraction ***It’s***) in statements about the following:

* Times and dates:
  + **It**’s nearly one o’clock.
  + **It**’s my birthday.
* **Weather:**
  + **It**’s raining.
  + **It**’s a lovely day.
  + **It** was getting cold.
  + **It’s hot outside, isn’t it?**
* **To** give an **opinion** about a place:
  + **It’s very cold** in here.
  + **It will be nice** when we get home.
  + **It’s very comfortable** in my new apartment.
* **To** give an **opinion** followed by **to-infinitive**:
  + **It’s nice** to meet you.
  + **It will be great** to go on holiday.
  + **It was interesting** to meet your brother at last.
* **To** give an **opinion** followed by an **-ing verb**:
  + **It’s great** living in Spain.
  + **It’s awful** driving in this heavy traffic.
  + **It can be hard work** looking after young children.
* **To** show **distance**:
  + **It is** not far from Glenview to Waukegan.
* To show the **general environment:**
  + **It is** very dusty in this house.

We use "it" to talk about people:

* We use ***it*** to talk about **ourselves**:
  + On the telephone: “Hello. **It**’s George.”
  + When people cannot see us: [Mary knocks on door] “**It**’s me. **It**’s Mary.”
* We use **it** to talk about **other people** especially when we point them out for the first time:
  + Look. **It’s** Michael Jordan.
  + Who’s that? I think **it’s** John’s brother.
* …Or when cannot see them and we ask them for their name:
  + (telephone rings, we pick it up) “Hello. Who is **it**?”
  + (someone knocks on door. We say:] “Who is **it**?”