

GIVING DIRECTIONS & DESCRIBING LOCATIONS

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We will use the map below to learn to use English for (1) describing where something is located, and (2) telling someone how to get to a place. First, some basics:

Road or street names can be called Street (St.) Boulevard (BLVD), Road (Rd) or Avenue (Ave.). The meaning is the same, like in Chinese when one street is called 中山路 while another street is named 苏州街. On the map below, we have streets named Main Street, Dallas Avenue, and Chicago Boulevard. The meanings are the same.

Now, let's look at some important vocabulary for describing parts of the street.

When two streets cross, it can be called any of these words.

Intersection  
Crossing  
Corner

Crossing, is not usually used with street names. We would simply say, "Turn right at the first crossing," or, "The Shoe Store is on a crossing." However, with we can say, "The Ice Cream Shop is on the intersection of Chicago and Dallas (sometimes, we can omit St. or Ave.), or, the "Book Store is on the corner of Chicago and Indianapolis."

There are several important sentences we use to describe places. Here are some examples on the map below.

- The parking lot is around the corner from Val's house.
- The café is down the street from Mini Mart.
- The Pet Shop is on Main Street.
- The Pet Shop is between the Gym and Alan's house.
- The Pet shop is beside the Gym.
- Mike's house is across from the Gym.

Amy's house is on the intersection (or corner) of Main and Detroit.

Intersection  
Crossing  
Corner

Kitty Corner  
Alan's house is kitty corner across from Wal Mart.

We estimate distance by blocks

From here to here is one block

Pizza Hut is two blocks from the

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When Chinese people speak English, they like to use the word, "opposite,." For example, on this map, they would say, "Jack's house is opposite the church." This is OK, but in modern English, we usually say, "Jack's house is across from the church."

Note: *Across from* and *kitty corner across from*, are different.

Sally's house is across from the Mini Mart.

But...

Sally's house is kitty corner across from Mike's house.

Across from and kitty corner across from. Look at the boxes below. Box A is across from D. A is kitty corner across from E. B is between A and C. B is across from E. B is kitty corner across from F (and D). E is between D and F.

A
B
C

D
E
F

Corner  
(intersection, crossing)  
Also, note that the intersection of Detroit and Chicago is called a T (丁字路口), or T crossing.

Curve

The hospital is around the corner from the post office.  
Annie's house is around the corner from Lily's house.

**Note the difference between a corner & curve**

**HOW TO GET THERE**

When traveling abroad, it will be extremely important to know how to understand when someone gives you directions. So, let's look at a couple of examples from the map.

We are at Annie's house, and want to go to Amy's house. First, go left on Chicago, two blocks, and then go (or turn) on right (on Detroit) one block. Amy's house will be on your right.

Now, we are at Amy's house and we want to go to the bookstore.

When we leave Amy's house, we will go left on Main Street. (Note, in Chinese we would now say, 一直走, which means, "go straight," but in English, there is no need to say this.) Go two blocks and turn right on Indianapolis. Go one block, and the bookstore will be on your left. It's on the intersection of Indianapolis and Chicago. (We could also say the bookstore is on the northeast corner of Indianapolis and Chicago.