



# **BBC WORLD SERVICE** LEARNING ENGLISH

[Instant Messaging](#)

## Instant Messaging 即时通讯

### A New Way to Communicate 通讯新途径

Read the text below and do the activity that follows.

阅读下面的短文，然后完成练习。

When you meet someone for the first time, do you ask for their ASL? Do you LOL if they come out with something funny, and say CU L8er when you finish the conversation? If you know what I'm talking about, then you are probably already a user of Instant Messaging, or IM.

The idea behind IM is simple. A program on your computer tells you when a friend is online. You can then send a message to your friend, who can type a reply instantly. To do this, you need an IM program.

Worldwide, AIM, the Instant Messaging service provided by AOL, is by far the most popular. It has 195 million users who send about 1.6 billion messages every day. ICQ, which is owned by AOL, has about 140 million messengers, and MSN and Windows IM make up about 75 million users.

The advantage over e-mail is that with Instant Messaging you know you're likely to get a reply. IM is already hugely popular in the USA, where people spend five times more time online than in Europe. However, IM is starting to take off in the UK, with over 3000 people signing up to MSN Messenger alone every day.

While the plus points of IM are obvious, there is one very important disadvantage: you can only contact someone on the same network as you. If your friend is using AIM, and you are using MSN, you cannot talk to each other. This makes IM less useful than it should be. Imagine if you couldn't send an e-mail from hotmail to yahoo. However, things look like they'll change soon.

In general, the future looks bright for IM. Lots of programs also allow you to have voice conversations, video conferencing – this means you can see the other person using a webcam – and also let you swap pictures, music and other files.

So, perhaps we'll all soon be asking someone's age, sex and location (ASL), and laughing out loud (LOL) when they say something funny. See you later! (CU L8er)



## Glossary 词汇表

come out with 想出	talking about 谈论
online 网上	worldwide 全球范围
billion 一亿	owned by ...拥有
make up 组成	advantage 优势
hugely 巨大地	take off 起步; 开始
signing up 登记	plus points 优点; 好处
obvious 明显的	disadvantage 缺点; 弊端
network 网络	the future looks bright 未来看好
video conferencing 视频会议	webcam 网眼; 网络摄像机
swap 交换	files 文件

### 1. Reading Quiz 阅读测验

Are these sentences true or false? Circle the correct answer.

以下句子哪句是真?哪句是假? 请圈出正确答案。

1. MSN Messenger is an e-mail program. True / False
2. People spend less time online in the USA than in Europe. True / False
3. ICQ is less popular than AIM. True / False
4. You have to use the same program to talk to your friends. True / False
5. You can exchange files with some IM services. True / False

## 2. Reading Quiz 2 阅读测试2

Answer the following questions about the text. You should write a short answer.

根据课文回答下列问题。请把回答限制在一到六个词之间。

1. What does an IM program on your computer tell you?

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2. How many messages are sent using AIM every day?

---

3. How many people are joining MSN Messenger every day?

---

4. What is the disadvantage with IM?

---

5. What does 'LOL' mean?

---

### 3. Summary Completion 填词填空

Complete the summary with words from the box.

从下表中选词填空

bright	by	hugely	obvious	off
online	swap	up	up	with

Instant Messaging, or IM, means using a program that tells you when a friend is 1. \_\_\_\_\_ so you can message them instantly, and they can reply.

IM is 2. \_\_\_\_\_ popular in the USA and is starting to take

3. \_\_\_\_\_ in the UK. 3000 people are signing 4. \_\_\_\_\_

to MSN Messenger every day.

AIM and ICQ are the two most popular systems. They are both owned

5. \_\_\_\_\_ AOL. These two systems make 6. \_\_\_\_\_

almost 350 million users.

The good points of IM are 7. \_\_\_\_\_, but there is one disadvantage.

You can only communicate with someone who is using the same program.

However, the future looks 8. \_\_\_\_\_ for IM. Some systems let you have

voice conversations, see each other using webcams, and 9. \_\_\_\_\_

pictures and music. IM also has its own language. You can use 'ASL' to find

out how old someone is, if they are a man or a woman, and where they are.

You can use 'LOL', meaning laugh out loud, if someone comes out

10. \_\_\_\_\_ something funny, and 'CU L8er', for see you later, or

goodbye.



#### 4. Wordsearch 单词搜索

Try to find the words associated with **COMPUTERS** in the puzzle below.

There are ten words to find. Words can be written horizontally (g), vertically (i) or diagonally (m)

请在下面的字谜游戏中，找出与 电脑 有关的英语单词来。

共有10个单词，其组成方式可能以水平的 (g) 垂直的 (i) 或对角的 (m) 形式出现。

x	t	a	s	l	j	s	i	m	p	l	e
p	r	y	b	n	c	j	h	h	e	p	o
r	i	w	p	q	o	z	x	c	m	t	r
o	m	i	g	e	m	e	s	s	a	g	e
g	f	d	e	r	p	m	w	y	i	h	p
r	n	b	v	f	u	i	a	a	l	v	l
a	l	k	j	w	t	u	p	e	d	c	y
m	j	u	y	h	e	g	b	d	s	w	w
t	s	d	f	r	r	b	z	x	c	v	b
o	o	i	u	y	s	d	c	h	g	f	r
l	a	s	k	j	g	f	m	a	o	h	r
o	n	l	i	n	e	b	g	t	m	f	d

computers	webcam	message	e-mail	reply
program	online	swap	simple	type



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## Answers 答案

### 1. Reading Quiz 阅读测验

Are these sentences true or false? Circle the correct answer.

1. MSN Messenger is an e-mail program. **False**
2. People spend less time online in the USA than in Europe. **False**
3. ICQ is less popular than AIM. **True**
4. You have to use the same program to talk to your friends. **True**
5. You can exchange files with some IM services. **True**

### 3. Summary Completion 选词填空

Complete the summary with words from the box.

Instant Messaging, or IM, means using a program that tells you when a friend is 1. online so you can message them instantly, and they can reply.

IM is 2. hugely popular in the USA and is starting to take 3. off in the UK. 3000 people are signing 4. up to MSN Messenger every day.

AIM and ICQ are the two most popular systems. They are both owned 5. by AOL. These two systems make 6. up almost 350 million users.

The good points of IM are 7. obvious, but there is one disadvantage.

You can only communicate with someone who is using the same program.

However, the future looks 8. bright for IM. Some systems let you have voice conversations, see each other using webcams, and 9. swap pictures and music.

IM also has its own language. You can use 'ASL' to find out how old someone is, if they are a man or a woman, and where they are.

You can use 'LOL', meaning laugh out loud, if someone comes out 10. with something funny, and 'CU L8er', for see you later, or goodbye.

### 2. Reading Quiz 2 阅读测验 2

Answer the following questions about the text. You should write a short answer.

1. What does an IM program on your computer tell you?  
When a friend is online
2. How many messages are sent using AIM every day?  
1.6 billion
3. How many people are joining MSN Messenger every day?  
3000
4. What is the disadvantage with IM?  
You can only contact someone on the same network as you.
5. What does 'LOL' mean?  
Laughing out loud

### 4. Wordsearch 单词搜索

	t				s	i	m	p	l	e
p		y			c			e		
r			p		o			m		r
o				e	m	e	s	s	a	g
g					p		w		i	p
r					u		a		l	l
a				w	t		p			y
m					e					
					r	b				
					s		c			
								a		
o	n	l	i	n	e				m	



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