

**'Try to phone Michael – he might be at home.'**

If you use *try* with the infinitive, it means that the action is something difficult and you have to try very hard because you

might not be able to do it:

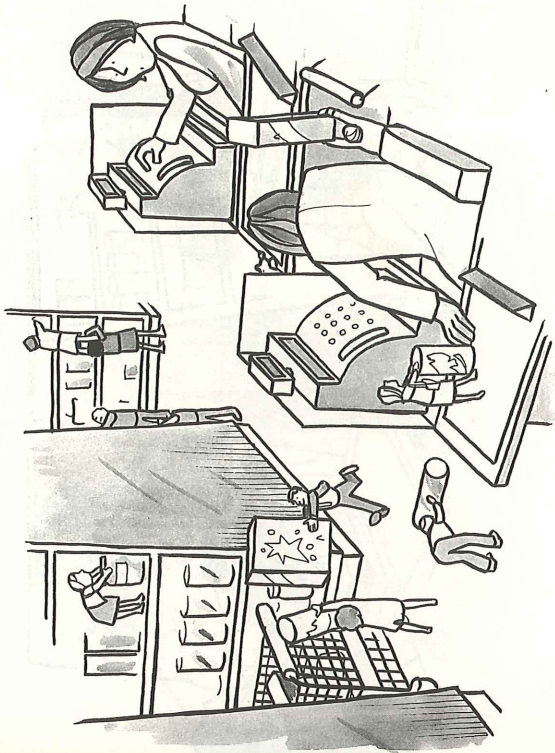
e.g. 'Try to walk' (your leg is injured);

'Try to sleep' (there's a lot of noise in the house).



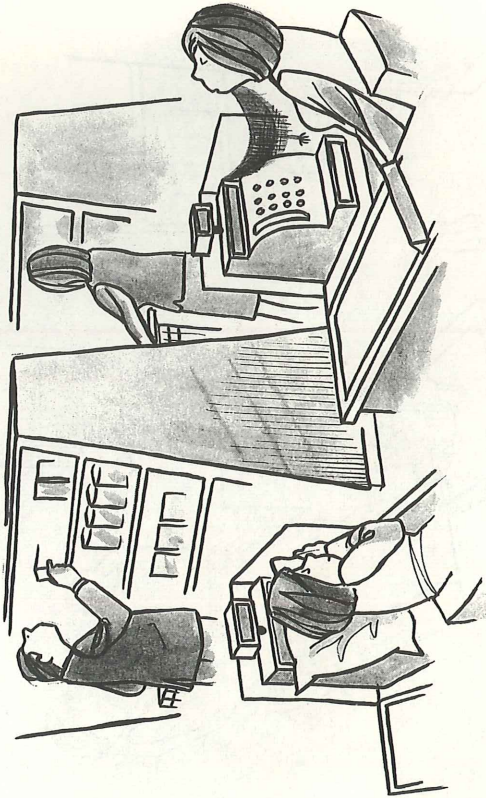
‘Try ..... Michael – he might be at home.’

Here you need to use *try* with the verb in another form, so that it means *experiment*. It’s not a difficult thing to do – you just do it and wait to see what the result is.



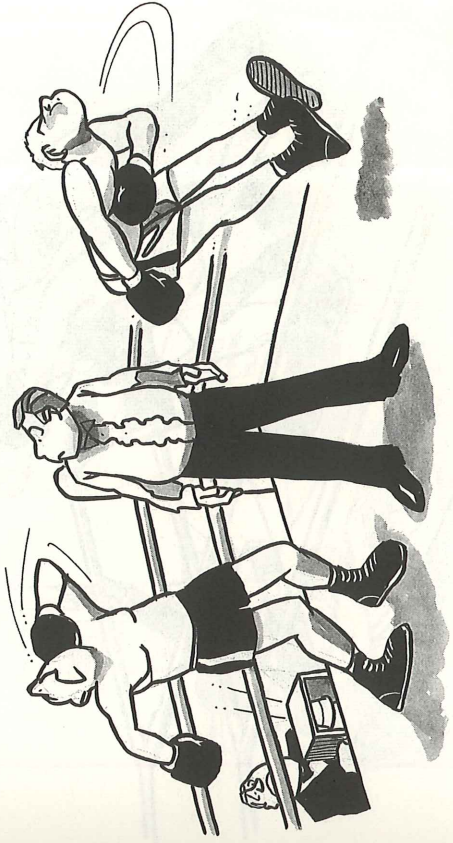
‘There were very little people in the supermarket this morning.’

*Little* is the opposite of *much*, and is used with uncountable nouns e.g. ‘I have very little time.’ If you use *little* with a plural noun, it means *small*, e.g. ‘There were some beautiful little houses near the beach.’



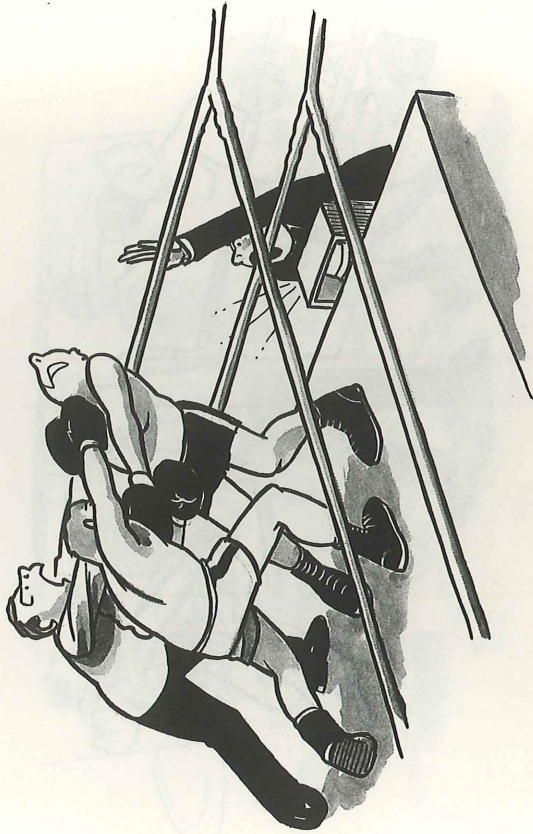
**'There were very ..... people in the supermarket this morning.'**

*People* is a plural noun, e.g. 'The people are friendly here.'  
With a plural noun you have to use a different word, which means the opposite of 'many'.



**'After the bell rang, the boxers continued hitting themselves.'**

The reflexive pronoun *themselves* means that one person is doing something to himself or herself, and the other person is doing something to himself or herself. This is used for sentences such as 'The children washed themselves and got into bed.'



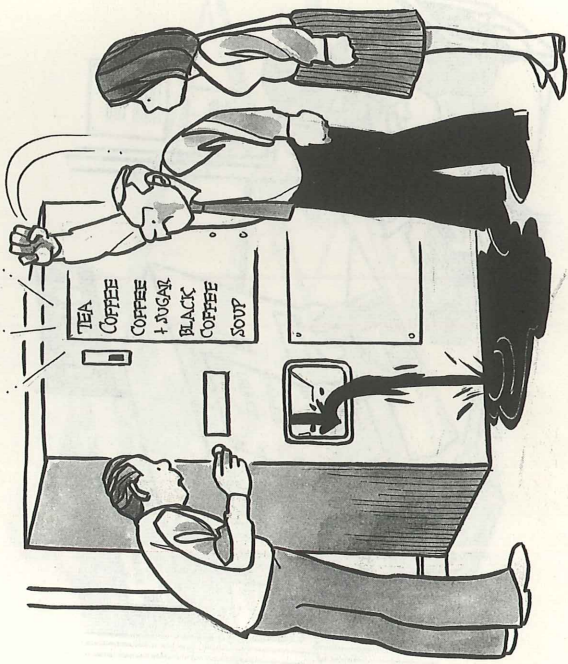
‘After the bell rang, the boxers continued hitting .....

If both people are doing something to the other person, you use two words.



‘Unfortunately the coffee machine is out of work.’

Only a person can be *out of work*, because it means *without a job*, or *unemployed*, e.g. ‘In Britain there were nearly 3 million people out of work in the 1980s.’



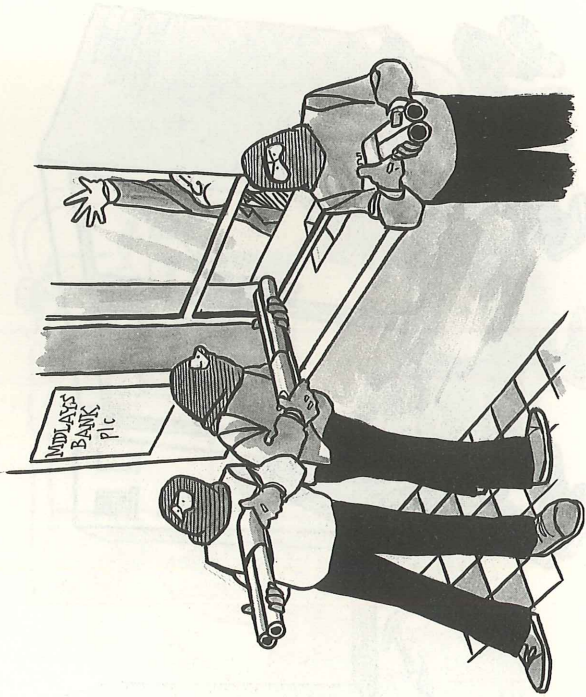
'Unfortunately the coffee machine is out of .....

For a machine which isn't working because it is broken, you need another word instead of *work*.



'Three men stole a bank in North London yesterday.'

You can only steal things that you can move, because if you steal something, you take it away from the place or person it belongs to,  
 e.g. 'She stole some money from the cash box.'



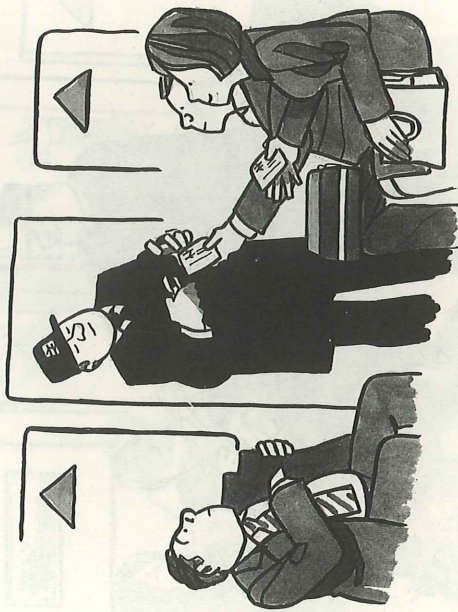
**'Three men ..... a bank  
in North London yesterday.'**

If you talk about the place that people steal things from, you use a different verb.



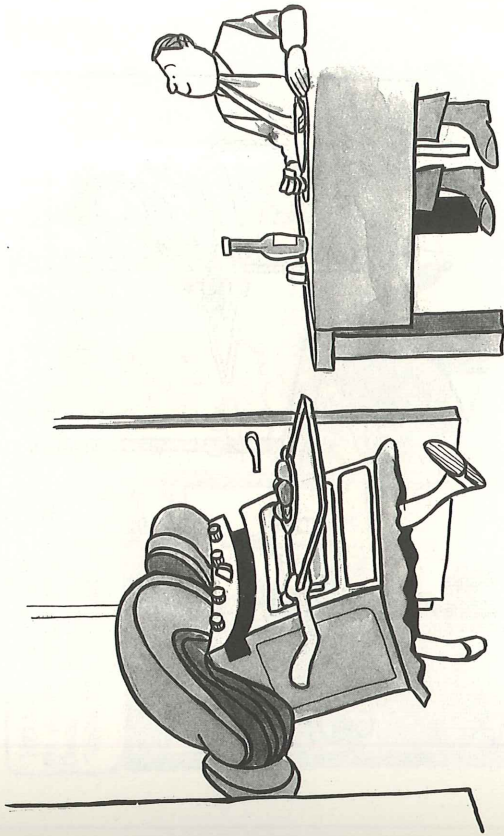
**'The ticket inspector came into the  
compartment and controlled our tickets.'**

If you *control* something, it means that you have power over it and can make it do what you want,  
e.g. 'The government controls the country', 'The driver couldn't control his car and it went off the road.'



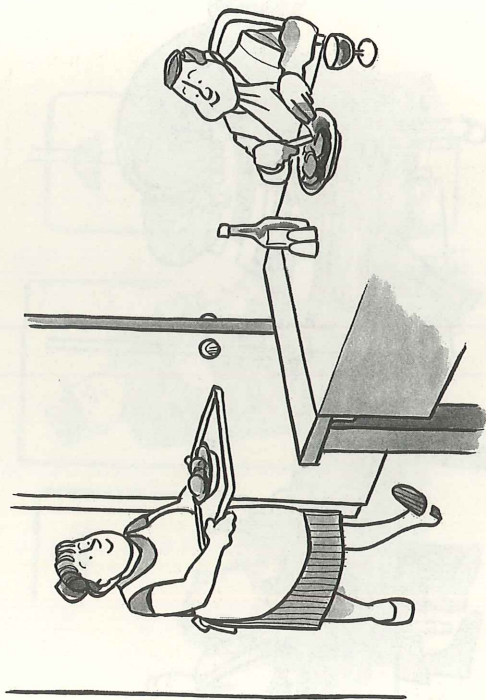
'The ticket inspector came into the compartment and ..... our tickets.'

When you enter Britain you can see a sign saying *Passport Control*, but you can't say that the Passport officials *control your passport*. Here you need the verb that means to *examine and look for any mistakes*.



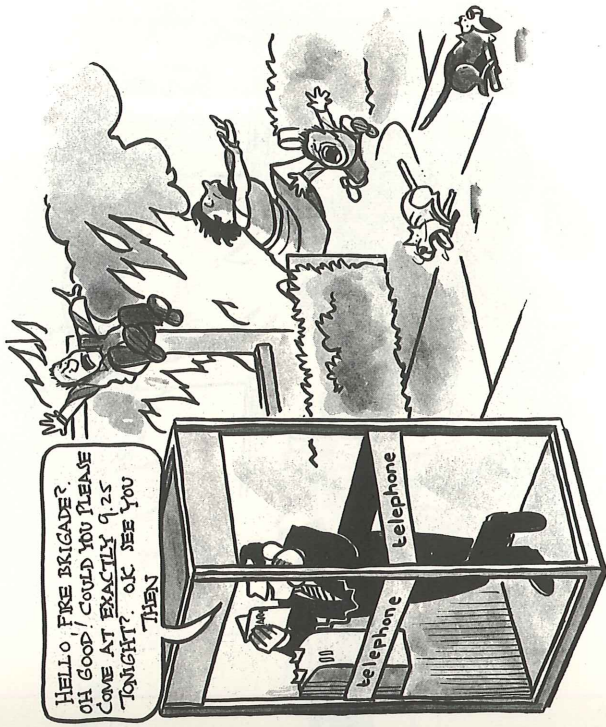
'My landlady is a very good cooker.'

A teacher teaches, and a writer writes, but a *cooker* is not the person who cooks. A cooker is a machine which cooks, just as a dishwasher is a machine which washes dishes.



'My landlady is a very good .....

For the person who cooks, you just use the verb as a noun.



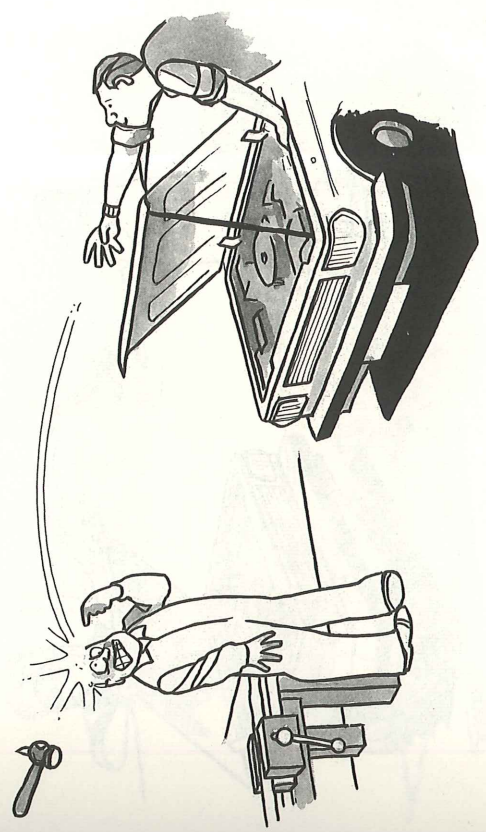
'They hoped the firemen would arrive on time.'

If you do something *on* time, you do it punctually, at exactly the time that was arranged before,  
 e.g. 'Because so many people go on holiday, not many planes take off on time these days.'



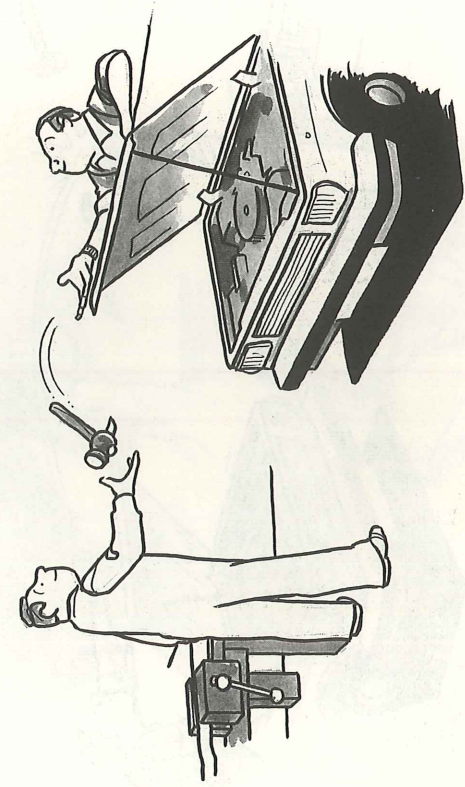
'They hoped the firemen would arrive .....

Here you need a different preposition with *time* to mean *early enough*. In a difficult or dangerous situation like this, it means *early enough to stop something bad happening*. It can also mean *before* a time which was arranged previously.



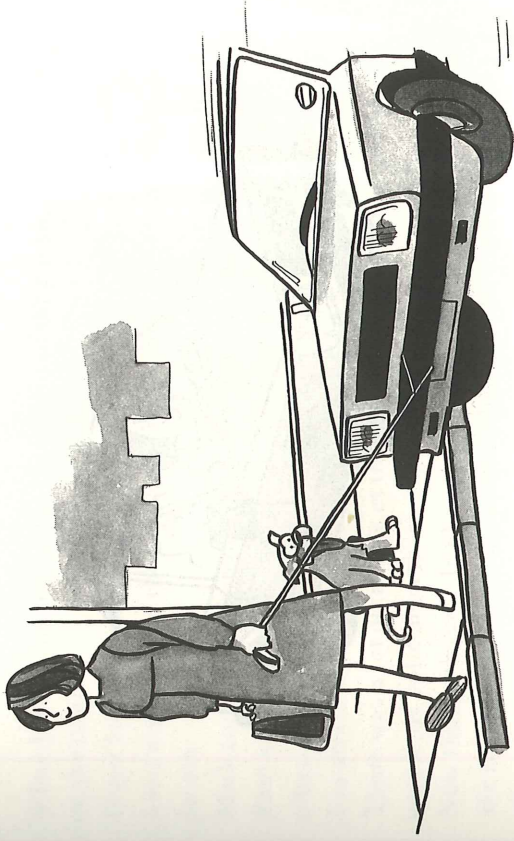
'Nick couldn't reach the hammer, so he asked Bob to throw it at him.'

As well as *throw*, there are some other verbs like *shout* and *point*, which have a different meaning with different prepositions. If you use them with *at*, it means you do the action in an angry and unfriendly way, e.g. 'I know I made a mistake, but you don't have to shout at me.'



'Nick couldn't reach the hammer, so he asked Bob to throw it ..... him.'

If someone does these actions in a friendly, helpful way, you use a different preposition.



'Philippa usually goes to work with her car.'

If you went somewhere *with* your car, it would be the same as going with another person, i.e. it would accompany you.