FREE PRACTICE | NEXTGEN

Needs vs. Wants Practice

Penny the Explorer asks more than 'Is it useful?' A need supports essentials such as safety, health, required learning, or basic daily living. A want adds enjoyment, convenience, or a preferred style. The same item may play a different role in different situations. Explain your reasoning without judging someone else's family.

Worked example: school shoes

A learner's only usable school shoes no longer fit. A durable $32 pair meets the school's requirements. An $85 limited-edition pair also works. A suitable replacement is a need in this situation; the $53 upgrade is a want. Wanting the upgrade is normal, but it competes with other goals.

Fictional situation	Need, want, or more context?
Required $6 notebook for class	_____
A second gaming controller for a friend visit	_____
Bus fare to a required appointment	_____
A phone upgrade when the current phone works	_____

Make a decision

1. With $40, choose the $32 required shoes and decide what to do with the remaining $8. Explain the trade-off.

2. When could internet access be a need? When could a more expensive internet plan be a want?

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NEEDS VS. WANTS PRACTICE

Check, explain, and apply

Model reasoning, not just labels

- Required notebook: a need if it is necessary for class and no suitable supplies are already available.

- Second controller: usually a want. Sharing turns or borrowing with permission may meet the same goal.

- Bus fare: a need in this stated situation if it is the safe, practical way to reach the appointment.

- Working-phone upgrade: usually a want. A new accessibility or safety requirement could change the context.

After the $32 shoes, $8 remains. Saving it keeps flexibility. Spending some on a treat can also fit a balanced plan if the learner considers other needs first. The important work is explaining the choice and checking the available money.

Internet needed for assigned schoolwork may be an essential learning expense where no practical alternative exists. A premium speed tier, extra entertainment bundle, or unnecessary upgrade may be a want. Consider access, cost, and the people who rely on the service.

Try a stronger question

1. Rewrite 'You should never buy wants' into a fair rule that includes enjoyment, affordability, and future goals. Then name one lower-cost alternative to a want you choose.

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