

SENIOR PROM

The Prom is a formal dance held at the end of the senior school year. It is one of the most important social events in a US teenager's life, a sort of rite of passage into early adulthood. In the UK, a lot of schools now hold proms in imitation of the American tradition.

High school proms are not a new phenomenon. Proms have been held in American schools for over 100 years. The event derives from the debutante balls organized by rich families for their teenage children. The school version was called a 'Prom' because a promenade was usually performed at the beginning of the evening. In the past proms tended to be simple events. There was no need to buy new clothes for the dance and the food was usually just tea and cakes or sandwiches.

This contrasts with the gala, all night events of today.

Prom nights are usually held in a hotel. Girls wear expensive long dresses – ball gowns – and they sometimes wear a flower, given to them by their partners. Boys dress in formal suits called tuxedos. It's important to arrive in style and groups of friends often rent a limousine to travel to and from the prom. During the evening, a Prom King and Queen – and, sometimes a Prince, Princess, Duke and Duchess! – are elected. The voting is based on appearance and popularity.



Listening



5 Listen to a student talking about her Senior Prom night. Complete the table.

- Location
- Themes
- Decorations
- Clothes
- Special events
- Music

Speaking

6 Class discussion. Discuss the following.

- What do you think of American school celebrations?
- Which celebration do you like best? Why?
- Would you like to have these traditions in your school? Why? Why not?

Writing

7 Write a paragraph (about 150 words) describing a school event you took part in.

- Give information about the event (the kind of event, the date, the place, etc.)
- Say if you enjoyed it or not. Explain why.