



PHONE CALLS



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Expemo code:
15RE-S7JF-N2EX

1

Warm up

Read the sentences about phone calls. Match the meanings to the phrasal verbs in bold.

Group 1

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. I'm in a train station and it's very noisy. I can't hear you very well. Can you speak up ? | a. answer the phone |
| 2. Oh no! We're going through a tunnel and you're starting to break up ! I only heard the first part of what you said. | b. end the call |
| 3. The phone's ringing. If he's not busy, he'll pick it up . | c. speak more loudly |
| 4. If you get a wrong number, just say you're sorry and hang up . | d. your voice is on and off again |

Group 2

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Yes, Ms Watkins is available. I'll put you through to her. | a. connect someone on their personal line |
| 2. I tried and tried to call the school, but I couldn't get through to anyone. I'll send them an email instead. | b. make contact with the person you are calling |
| 3. You want to speak to my brother? OK, hang on a second. Jim? | c. wait - informal |
| 4. Could I just ask you to hold on for a moment while I see if the manager is available? | d. wait - more formal |



Answer these questions:

1. Are there any times when you don't **pick up** the phone when it rings?
2. Have you had problems **getting through** to someone on the phone recently?
3. Are there any reasons why you **hang up** the phone in the middle of a call?

2**Listening**

Listen to these three phone calls and decide if the sentences are true or false.

**Phone call 1**

1. Josh and Tamara are having some problems.
2. Tamara doesn't leave a message.

Phone call 2

1. Mr Bunn is on holiday.
2. Mr Abernathy wants Mr Bunn to email him.

Phone call 3

1. Andy is going to arrive at 10:30.
2. Andy wants Laurence to text him.

Which call is the most formal? Why?





Listen again and write in the missing words.

Phone call 1

- A: Hello? Josh's phone.
B: Hi. Is Josh there?
A: Who's this?
B: This is Tamara.
A: Hang _____¹ a minute, I'll get him. Josh? Josh? ... Sorry, he can't come to the phone.
B: Oh. He hung _____² on me the last time – we spoke – we had an argument. Can you tell him that I called to say I'm sorry? Have you got that?
A: Yes. I'll pass that on.
B: Thanks. Bye.
A: Bye.

Phone call 2

- C: Hello, Gladstone Hotel. Trudy speaking. How can I help you?
D: Hello. Could I speak to Mr Bunn, please?
C: Who's calling, please?
D: It's Mr Abernathy, from May Flowers.
C: Please hold _____¹ a moment. I'll put you _____². ... I'm afraid Mr Bunn is not available. He's in a meeting until 3 o'clock.
D: Sorry, can you speak _____³, please? I can't hear you very well.
C: Yes, Mr Bunn is in a meeting until 3 o'clock.
D: I see. I'd like to leave a message, please.
C: All right.
D: I need to check the order numbers on the flowers he asked for. I have 2-4-5-6-9-2 and I want to know if that's correct. Could he email me to confirm? Would you like me to say that again?
C: Yes, please, just the order number.
D: It's 2-4-5-6-9-2.
C: Thank you. I'll make sure he gets the message.
D: Thanks, good-bye.
C: Good-bye.



Phone call 3

Hi Laurence! It's Andy here. You're not picking _____¹, so I guess you're driving to work now. Since I can't get _____² to you, I'll leave a message. I'm calling to tell you that I'll be late for our meeting. Sorry. I think I should be there at half past ten. I'm on the train and it's delayed... again. Hang on a minute. They're making an announcement.... OK, now it looks like I'll be there at eleven. Have you got that? Can you text me to confirm? We're going through a tunnel, so I'm probably breaking _____³. Anyway, see you later....





3

Language point

Phone calls follow certain routines. This makes it easier to understand what's happening and complete the call successfully. It's important to use the correct style when you're speaking on the phone. The style you use depends on the situation and the relationship you have with the other person.

Look at phone calls 1 and 2 and complete the table with the missing phrases.

| | personal/informal | business/formal |
|---|---|---|
| answer the phone | Hello. / Hi. | Hello, Gladstone Hotel. How can I help you? |
| ask for someone | _____ 1 | Could I speak to Mr Bunn, please? |
| identify yourself | This is Tamara. / Trudy _____ 2 . It's Mr Abernathy. | ← |
| ask for caller's name | Who's this? | _____ 3 |
| ask someone to wait | Hang on a minute. | Please hold on a moment. |
| say you will try to make the connection | _____ 4 | I'll put you through. |
| say someone is not available | _____ 5 He isn't here. | I'm afraid Mr Bunn is not available. |
| offer to take a message | Can I take a message for you? | ← |
| leave a message | Can you tell him that I called? | _____ 6 |
| ask for confirmation | Could/Can you/he email/text me/call me back to confirm? | ← |
| say that you will give the person the message | _____ 7 | I'll make sure he gets the message. |
| ask for repetition | Sorry, could you speak up? Sorry, could you say that again, please? | ← |
| checking the other person has understood | _____ 8 | Would you like me to say that again? |



4

Practice

Read the two phone calls and add ten missing words in the correct places, as in the example: *Would you me to say that again? Would you like me to say that again?*

Phone call 1

Josh: Hello, Tamara?

Tamara: Hello.

Josh: is Josh.

Tamara: I know. Hang a minute. I want to go to another room. ... Ok. I called and left a to say I'm sorry.

Josh: My housemate passed it on to me. I'm sorry too.

Tamara: It was really my fault.

Josh: Can you up? I didn't hear that.

Tamara: I said, it was really my fault.

Josh: Don't worry about it. Listen, can you me back in ten minutes? There's someone at the door.

Tamara: Sure. Bye.

Josh: Bye.

Phone call 2

Receptionist: Hello, May Flowers. How I help you?

Mr Bunn: Hello. Could I speak Mr Abernathy, please?

Receptionist: Who's calling, please?

Mr Bunn: Mr Bunn, from the Gladstone Hotel.

Receptionist: I'll put through.

Mr Abernathy: Hello? Tim Abernathy .

Mr Bunn: Hello, this is Mr Bunn from the Gladstone Hotel. I'm returning your call. I'm afraid there's a problem with your order.

Mr Abernathy: Oh no. What sort of problem? ...



5

Speaking

Work in A/B pairs. Look through the plans for two phone calls and roleplay the conversations, using language from the lesson.

| (1) An informal call to a home or business | |
|---|---|
| Student A | Student B |
| 1 Answer the call | 2 Identify yourself and ask for someone |
| 3 Ask the caller to wait; try to make the connection and say that the person is not available | 4 Ask to leave a message |
| 5 Ask the caller to wait while you find a pen; return to the call | 6 Leave the message |
| 7 Ask for repetition of one part of the message | 8 Repeat the information |
| 9 Say that you will give the person the message | 10 Thank the other person; close the call |
| 11 Close the call | |

| (2) A formal call to a business | |
|--|--|
| Student B | Student A |
| 1 Answer the call | 2 Identify yourself and ask for someone |
| 3 Ask the caller to wait; check if the person is available; report that the person is not available until a certain time | 4 Say you want to leave a message; identify yourself and your business; give your message and ask for confirmation |
| 5 Ask for repetition of the message | 6 Repeat the message; check the other person has understood |
| 7 Repeat the information to confirm | 8 Say the information is correct |
| 9 Say that you will give the person the message | 10 Thank the other person; close the call |
| 11 Close the call | |



Use the first table to plan a voicemail message. Then deliver the message to your partner. Your partner will make notes about what you said in the second table.

| | |
|--|--|
| (3) Voicemail message | |
| My voicemail message | |
| The name of the person you are calling | |
| Your name | |
| Why you're calling - main reason | |
| Details | |
| Ask for confirmation | |
| Close the call | |

| | |
|--|--|
| (3) Voicemail message | |
| My partner's voicemail message | |
| The name of the person he/she is calling | |
| His/her name | |
| Why he/she is calling - main reason | |
| Details | |





6 Extra practice/homework

Read the phone call and write the missing sentences in the gaps.

Andy: Hello?

Ellen: Hello, Tiger Books. _____¹ .

Andy: Hi, Ellen. Is Laurence there? He's not picking up on his mobile.

Ellen: _____² Sorry, he's not here yet.
 _____³ ?

Andy: Yes, please. Can you tell him that I'm going to be late for our meeting? There's a problem with the trains. I'll be there at eleven.

Ellen: _____⁴ ? You're breaking up.

Andy: Yes, there's a problem with the trains and I won't be able to get to our meeting until eleven. _____⁵ ?

Ellen: No, that's fine. _____⁶ .

Andy: _____⁷ ?

Ellen: I'll ask him to text you as soon as he gets in.

Andy: _____⁸

Ellen: Bye.

7 Optional extension

There are often special problems when you use a mobile phone. Match the problems to the reasons/causes.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Your battery is dead. | a. You are out of credit. |
| 2. Your phone works, but you can't make any calls. | b. You are underground. |
| 3. Nothing works. | c. You dropped your phone. |
| 4. The phone is blocked. | d. You entered the wrong PIN code three times. |
| 5. You get a message from your provider and you can't get onto the Internet. | e. You forgot to charge your phone. |
| 6. The call keeps breaking up. | f. You pocket-dialled them. |
| 7. The screen is cracked. | g. Your phone is broken or it got wet. |
| 8. You called someone by mistake. | h. You've run out of data. |

Which of these problems have you had recently? What did you do?