

В КОПИЛКУ УЧИТЕЛЯ

English Club

Telephone English*

If the phone rings in English, don't be afraid to answer it! The fear of talking on the phone in a second language will disappear if you practise often. The hardest part about using the phone in a language that is not your own is the fact that you cannot see the other person's eyes, mouth and body movements (body language). Although you might not be aware of it, in face-to-face conversation you lip-read and watch for smiles, frowns and moving hands. Listening to someone on the telephone is like doing a section from a taped recording in class. The only difference is that you have to talk back!

In this lesson we look at some of the words and expressions that we use for telephoning. There are also some practice sessions and a quiz for you to check your understanding. And remember, practice makes perfect! Ring, ring...

- Telephone Terms
- Telephone Language
- Telephone Tips
- Practice 1: Making an Appointment
- Practice 2: Taking a Message
- Practice 3: Ordering a Pizza
- Telephone Quiz



Telephone Terms

Here are some of the words and terms that we use to talk about telephoning.

answer	to say "hello" into the phone when it rings
answering machine	something that you can record a message on if the person you are calling isn't home
busy signal	a beeping sound that tells the caller that the other person is already on the phone with someone else
call	a telephone conversation; to telephone
caller	the person who telephones
call back / phone back	to call someone who called you first
call display	a screen that shows you who is calling
cellular phone / cell phone	a telephone that you can take with you away from your house; mobile phone
cordless phone	a phone that is not attached to the wall (you can walk short distances with it at home or in the garden)
dial	to press the buttons on the phone
dial tone	the sound the phone makes when you pick it up
directory / phone book	a book that alphabetically lists local phone numbers of people and businesses
hang up	to put the receiver down and end a call
operator	a person who answers telephone-related questions
pager	a small machine you wear that makes a noise (or vibrates) when someone wants you to call them
phone	a telephone; to telephone
phone booth / pay phone	a place where you can pay to use a telephone in public
pick up	to answer the phone
receiver	the piece on the phone that you speak into and listen from
ring	the sound a phone makes when somebody calls; to make that sound
ringer	the sound-piece that alerts a person that a call is coming through

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Telephone Language

Here are some typical phrases that you can use in a telephone conversation.

Answering the phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello? (informal) • Thank you for calling Boyz Autobody. Jody speaking. How can I help you? • Doctor's office.
Introducing yourself	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hey George. It's Lisa calling. (informal) • Hello, this is Julie Madison calling. • Hi, it's Gerry from the dentist's office here. • This is she*. • Speaking*. <p>* The person answering says this if the caller does not recognize their voice.</p>
Asking to speak with someone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Fred in? (informal) • Is Jackson there, please? (informal) • Can I talk to your sister? (informal) • May I speak with Mr Green, please? • Would the doctor be in / available?
Connecting someone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just a sec. I'll get him. (informal) • Hang on one second. (informal) • Please hold and I'll put you through to his office. • One moment, please. • All of our operators are busy at this time. Please, hold for the next available person.
Making special requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you, please, repeat that? • Would you mind spelling that for me? • Could you speak up a little, please? • Can you speak a little slower, please. My English isn't very strong. • Can you call me back? I think we have a bad connection. • Can you, please, hold for a minute? I have another call.
Taking a message for someone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sammy's not in. Who's this? (informal) • I'm sorry, Lisa's not here at the moment. Can I ask who's calling? • I'm afraid he's stepped out. Would you like to leave a message? • He's on lunch right now. Who's calling, please? • He's busy right now. Can you call again later? • I'll let him know you called. • I'll make sure she gets the message.
Leaving a message with someone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, can you tell him his wife called, please. • No, that's okay, I'll call back later. • Yes, it's James from Complnc. here. When do you expect her back in the office? • Thanks, could you ask him to call Brian when he gets in? • Do you have a pen handy? I don't think he has my number. • Thanks. My number is 222-3456, extension 12.
Confirming information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Okay, I've got it all down. • Let me repeat that just to make sure. • Did you say 555 Charles St.? • You said your name was John, right? • I'll make sure he gets the message.
Listening to an answering machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello. You've reached 222-6789. Please leave a detailed message after the beep. Thank you. • Hi, this is Elizabeth. I'm sorry I'm not available to take your call at this time. Leave me a message and I'll get back to you as soon as I can. • Thank you for calling Dr Mindin's office. Our hours are 9 am-5 pm, Monday–Friday. Please call back during these hours, or leave a message after the tone. If this is an emergency please call the hospital at 333-7896.

Leaving a message on an answering machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hey Mike. It's Chris. Call me! (informal) • Hello, this is Ricardo calling for Luke. Could you please return my call as soon as possible. My number is 334-5689. Thank you. • Hello Maxwell. This is Marina from the doctor's office calling. I just wanted to let you know that you're due for a check-up this month. Please give us a ring / buzz whenever it's convenient.
Finishing a conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well, I guess I better get going. Talk to you soon. • Thanks for calling. Bye for now. • I have to let you go now. • I have another call coming through. I better run. • I'm afraid that's my other line. • I'll talk to you again soon. Bye.

Sometimes it is necessary to spell something over the telephone (for example a postal code or name). Native English speakers often use a special alphabet when they spell over the phone. Example: postal code B2V 3A8 = **B** as in **Bravo**, **2**, **V** as in **Victor**, **3**, **A** as in **Alpha**, **8**.

English Phonetic Spelling

It is very easy to learn English phonetic spelling. Start by

spelling your name, then your company or address. Soon, you will know the whole alphabet. It also helps to remember that there are several groups of words that go together:

- **Dances:** Foxtrot, Tango
- **Shakespeare:** Romeo & Juliet
- **Men's first names:** Charlie, Mike, Oscar, Victor
- **Cities:** Lima, Quebec

A Alpha	G Golf	L Lima	Q Quebec	V Victor
B Bravo	H Hotel	M Mike	R Romeo	W Whisky
C Charlie	I India	N November	S Sierra	X X-ray
D Delta	J Juliet	O Oscar	T Tango	Y Yankee
E Echo	K Kilo	P Papa	U Uniform	Z Zulu
F Foxtrot				

Telephone Tips

1. Speak slowly and clearly

Listening to someone speaking in a second language over the telephone can be very challenging because you cannot see the person you are trying to hear. However, it may be even more difficult for the person you are talking with to understand you. You may not realize that your pronunciation isn't clear because your teacher and fellow students know and understand you. Pay special attention to your weak areas (such as "r's" and "l's" or "b's" and "v's") when you are on the phone. If you are nervous about using the phone in English, you may notice yourself speaking very quickly. Practise or write down what you are going to say and take a few deep breaths before you make a phone call.

2. Make sure you understand the other speaker

Don't pretend to understand everything you hear over the telephone. Even native speakers ask each other to repeat and confirm information from time to time. This is especially important if you are taking a message for someone else. Learn the appropriate expressions that English speakers use when they don't hear something properly. Don't be afraid to remind the person to slow down more than once. Keep your telephone in an area that is away from other noise distractions such as a radio or television.

3. Practise with a friend

Ask another student to practise talking on the phone with you. You might choose one night a week and take turns phoning each other at a certain time. Try to talk for at least fifteen minutes. You can talk socially, or role-play different scenarios in a business environment. If you don't have access to a telephone, you can practise by setting two chairs up back to back. The most important thing about practising telephone English is that you aren't able to see each other's mouths. It is amazing how much people lip-read without realizing.

4. Use businesses and recordings

There are many ways to get free telephone English practice. After business hours, you can call and listen to recorded messages. Write down what you hear the first time, and then call back and check if your notes are accurate. Use the phone in your everyday life. Call for a pizza delivery instead of going out to eat. Call a salon to book a hair appointment. You can even phone the movie theatre to ask for the listings instead of using the newspaper. Some large cities have free recordings you can call for information such as your daily horoscope or the weather. (Make sure that you aren't going to get charged for these numbers first.) Some products have free phone numbers on the packaging that you can call for information. Think of a question you might want to ask and

call the free number! For example, call the number on the back of the cereal box and ask for coupons. You will have to give your name and address. Make sure you have a pen handy so that you can repeat the information and check your comprehension.

5. Learn telephone etiquette (manners)

The way that you speak to your best friend on the phone is very different to the way you should speak to someone in a business setting. Many ESL speakers make the mistake of being too direct on the telephone. It is possible that the person on the other line will think that you are being rude on purpose if you don't use formal language in certain situations. Sometimes just one word such as "could" or

"may" is necessary in order to sound polite. You should use the same modals you would use in a formal "face-to-face" situation. Take the time to learn how to answer the phone and say goodbye in a polite manner, as well as all the various ways one can start and end a conversation casually.

6. Practise dates and numbers

It only takes a short time to memorize *English Phonetic Spelling*, but it is something that you will be able to use in any country. You should also practise saying dates and numbers aloud. You and a friend can write out a list of dates and numbers and take turns reading them over the phone to each other. Record what you hear. Swap papers the next day and check your answers.

Practice 1: Making an Appointment

Receptionist: Thank you for phoning Maple Dental Clinic. Sylvia (speaks / speaking / calls). How can I help you?

Thelma: Hi Sylvia. (This be / It's / I am) Thelma Woods calling. How are you today?

Receptionist: I'm fine Mrs Woods. How are you?

Thelma: Well, actually, I have a bit of a sore tooth. I was hoping Dr Morris would have some time to see me this week.

Receptionist: I'm (afraid / scared / worried) he's booked this week. I can put you in for 2 pm next Tuesday. How does that sound?

Thelma: That would be great.

Receptionist: I'll have to give you the address of our new office.

Thelma: Oh, that's right, you moved.

Receptionist: Yes, we moved downtown. Do you have (a pen handy / the handy pen / the available pen)?

Thelma: Could you hold on a (buzz / moment / time), please. ...Okay, go ahead Sylvia.

Receptionist: Okay, we are at 723 Baltic Avenue. Suite 004.

Thelma: (If you could / Please can you / Would you mind) spelling that for me?

Receptionist: Sure. That's seven-twenty-three Baltic – B (for Bear / as if Brave / as in Bravo), A as in Alpha, L as in Lima, T as in Tango, I as in India, and C as in Charlie. And it's suite zero zero four.

Thelma: Okay great. I'll see you on Tuesday then.

Receptionist: Okay. (Great for / Pleased to / Thanks for) calling. See you then.

Thelma: Thanks. Bye.

Answers:

speaking / It's / afraid / a pen handy / moment / Would you mind / as in Bravo / Thanks for

Practice 2: Taking a Message

Leslie: (Hello? / Hi? / Yes?)

Cameron: Hi, is this Leslie?

Leslie: Yes. (Who are you? / And you? / Who's this?)

Cameron: It's Cameron here. Is Maria (inside / in / where)?

Leslie: No, she just (came / stepped / gone) out for a moment. Can I take a message?

Cameron: Yes, thanks. (Could you / Would you mind / Can you be) ask her to meet me at the Capitol 4 movie theatre at 7 pm tonight?

Leslie: Sure. Just let me write that down. Oh, Cameron. Could you (hold off / holding / hold) for a second? I have to take another call.

Cameron: No problem.

Leslie: Hi. Sorry about that. Now could you please (say again / repeat / review) that information? I didn't have a pen handy.

Cameron: Sure. It's the Capitol 4 theatre at 7 o'clock.

Leslie: Okay, I've got it. Is there anything else?

Cameron: No, that's great.

Leslie: Okay. Uh-oh, there's my other line again. I'd better (call / run / hang on).

Cameron: Okay, thanks again. Bye for now.

Leslie: (Bye. Bye / Bye too / See you again.)

Answers:

Hello? / Who's this? / in / stepped / Could you / hold / repeat / run / Bye. Bye.

Practice 3: Ordering a Pizza

Hostess: Pepi's Pizza. How can I (call / answer / help) you?

Customer: Hi. I'd like to order a pizza, please.

Hostess: Okay. I'll have to transfer your call to our take-out department. (One / This / A) moment please.

Recorded Message: Thank you for calling Pepi's Pizza. All of our operators are busy (working today / and away / at the moment). Please hold for the next available person.

Take-out Clerk: Thank you for waiting. Naoko (is here / speaking / talks). Is this for take-out or delivery?

Customer: Delivery, please.

Take-out Clerk: Can I have your name and address, please?

Customer: My name is...

Take-out Clerk: Sorry, it's really busy in here. Could you (speak out / speaking / speak up) a little, please?

Customer: Oh, sure. This is Angie Smith. My address is number two Front Street.

Take-out Clerk: Is that an apartment or a house?

Customer: It's an apartment. Number seventeen.

Take-out Clerk: Okay. And what would you like to order today?

Customer: I'd like a large pepperoni pizza with mushrooms, olives and extra cheese.

Take-out Clerk: I'm sorry, my English isn't (better / very strong / easy). Could you slow down a little, please?

Customer: No problem. That's a large pizza.

Take-out Clerk: Large pizza. Okay.

Customer: And I'd like it with pepperoni and mushrooms.

Take-out Clerk: Pepperoni and mushrooms. Is there anything else?

Customer: Yes, olives and extra cheese, please.

Take-out Clerk: Okay. I've (got your message / got information / got it all down).

Customer: Great. And how long will that be?

Take-out Clerk: It will be about thirty minutes, Miss Smith.

Customer: And how much will it cost?

Take-out Clerk: Um-could you please (hold off / holding / hold on) while I check with the kitchen?

Customer: Don't worry about it. I have to go. I have another call (came / to come / coming through). Thank you. Bye for now.

Take-out Clerk: Okay. Thanks for calling. Bye.

Answers:

help / One / at the moment / speaking / speak up / very strong / got it all down / hold on / coming through

Telephone Quiz

- When you pick up the phone to call someone you hear a (ringer / dial tone / receiver).
- If I'm not home leave a message on my (directory / answering / dial) machine.
- Sally must be talking to her mom because I have been getting a (answer / chat / busy signal) for two hours.
- I never answer my (cordless / cell phone / pay phone) while I'm driving.
- Mark always turns his (ringer / other line / call display) off when he is studying.
- I'm busy right now. Can you (hang up / call back / telephone book) later.
- You have to (answer / hang up / dial) "0" for the operator.
- I have a (receiver / busy signal / cordless) so I can do the dishes and chat at the same time.
- You will need a quarter or a phone card if you want to use the (cell phone / pay phone / pager).
- I know it was my boyfriend who called because I have a (dial tone, call display / directory).

Answers:

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. dial tone | 6. call back |
| 2. answering | 7. dial |
| 3. busy signal | 8. cordless |
| 4. cell phone | 9. pay phone |
| 5. ringer | 10. call display |