



PHONE CALLS



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:
1FE1-31L6-084



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 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 vacation.
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? Did you get 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 from 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, goodbye.
- C: Goodbye.

**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 ten thirty. 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. Did you get that? Can you text me to confirm? We're going through a tunnel, so I'm probably breaking _____³. Anyway, see you later....





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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?



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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? ...



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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	





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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 cell phone.

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.

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Optional extension

There are often special problems when you use a cell 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-dialed 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?



Transcripts

2. Listening

Phone call : 1

A: Hello? Josh's phone.

B: Hi. Is Josh there?

A: Who's this?

B: This is Tamara.

A: Hang on a minute, I'll get him. Josh? Josh? ... Sorry, he can't come to the phone.

B: Oh. He hung up on me the last time we spoke – we had an argument. Can you tell him that I called to say I'm sorry? Did you get 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 on a moment. I'll put you through. ... I'm afraid Mr. Bunn is not available. He's in a meeting until 3 o'clock.

D: Sorry, can you speak up, 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 from 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, goodbye.

C: Goodbye.

Phone call : 3

Andy: Hi Laurence! It's Andy here. You're not picking up, so I guess you're driving to work now. Since I can't get through 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 ten thirty. I'm on the train, and it's delayed... again. Hang on a minute.

Andy: They're making an announcement.... OK, now it looks like I'll be there at eleven. Did you get that? Can you text me to confirm?

Andy: We're going through a tunnel, so I'm probably breaking up. Anyway, see you later....



Key

1. Warm up

5 mins.

Go over the instructions with the class and elicit/explain that phrasal verbs are verb + preposition/adverb. Give students a minute, working alone, to choose their answers. Check answers and pose the follow-up questions and elicit a range of brief responses.

Group 1:

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. c | 2. d |
| 3. a | 4. b |

Group 2:

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. a | 2. b |
| 3. c | 4. d |

2. Listening

10 mins.

Explain the context and go over the instructions for the first listening activity. Give students a minute to look through the sentences first so they know what they're listening for. Play the recording and then check answers. For the second listening activity, students will complete a gap fill task to review the phrasal verbs from the Warm up. Give students a minute to recall the missing word from their exercise without looking back at the Warm up. Then play the recording again for them to check. Check answers with the whole class. If you have time, students could work in pairs to read the dialogues out loud and take turns reading alternate sentences of the voicemail.

Phone call 1

1. T - they had an argument
2. F - she leaves a message; she wants to apologize to Josh.

Phone call 2

1. F - he's in a meeting
2. T

Phone call 3

1. F - at 11:00
2. T

Which call is the most formal? Why?

Phone call 2 - it is a business call between two people who don't have a familiar relationship.

Phone call 1:

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. on | 2. up |
|-------|-------|

Phone call 2

- | | | |
|-------|------------|-------|
| 1. on | 2. through | 3. up |
|-------|------------|-------|

Phone call 3



1. up
2. through
3. up

3. Language point

10 mins.

Go over the information and elicit/explain the meaning of a *routine* (something that repeatedly happens in the same way). Go over the structure of the table and call attention to the columns showing informal and formal language. Ask students to refer to the transcript in the listening exercise to complete the information in the table. The arrows show that some phrases can be used in both personal/informal and business/formal contexts. Drill pronunciation of all the phrases. Make students aware that this type of functional language only works well if the phrases are accurately formulated and pronounced naturally. If students are inaccurate in their use of functional language, it may confuse their listener. If you haven't already done this, students could work in pairs to read the two phone calls out loud.

1. Is Josh there?
2. speaking
3. Who's calling, please?
4. I'll get him.
5. Sorry, he can't come to the phone.
6. I'd like to leave a message, please.
7. I'll pass that on.
8. Did you get that?

4. Practice

10 mins.

Go over the instructions and the example with the class. Elicit that students need to look out for phrases from the table in the Language point and then recall the missing word that completes these phrases. They should first work alone and from memory, and then check answers in pairs, using the table to help. Finally, check answers with the whole class. If you have time, ask students to read the dialogues out loud in pairs.

NOTE: If students are finding this difficult, skip the speaking stage and do the extra practice/homework exercises in class for additional support.

Phone call 1:

1. This
2. on
3. message
4. speak
5. call

Phone call 2:

1. can
2. to
3. It's
4. you
5. speaking

5. Speaking

13 mins.

In this stage, students will activate the vocabulary and grammar from the lesson in a speaking activity. Make sure students understand the aim of the activity is to practice and repeat phone call phrases and they will have to use their imaginations.

Go over the instructions and demonstrate how the prompts can be converted into natural speech with the first two items. Then set up A/B pairs and give students a couple of minutes to look through the first phone call and plan what they want to say.



There is no need to write anything. When students are ready, they can roleplay the phone call. Monitor and support as necessary and finish off this stage by asking pairs how they handled the call. Round off the stage with some error correction, including pronunciation.

Students can repeat the same procedure with the second phone call.

In the third activity, students plan a voicemail message and then deliver it to their partner, who can take notes. The pairs can check answers with each other. Encourage pairs to reflect on how successful they were, and if they had any problems, why these occurred.

6. Extra practice/homework

2 mins to explain.

These exercises can be assigned for homework or used instead of the speaking activity if the class needs more support. If you use these for homework, make sure that you check the exercises in a future class, or collect them from students and check them yourself outside class. If you prefer, you can make the answers available to students and they can check their own answers.

1. Ellen speaking. / This is Ellen
2. I'll put you through. / I'll get him
3. Can I take a message for you
4. Sorry, can you say that again
5. Did you get that? / Would you like me to say that again
6. I'll make sure he gets the message / I'll pass that on
7. Can you ask him to text me to confirm
8. Thanks. Bye.

7. Optional extension

10 mins.

These exercises are designed as a cooler activity if you have time in your lesson. In this activity, students match phone problems and answers before discussing personal experiences and solutions.

- | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1. e | 2. a | 3. g | 4. d | 5. h | 6. b | 7. c | 8. f |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|