

The art of saying 'no'

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We are planning to go paintballing next Saturday. Are you, in principle, up for it?

If your immediate response is always 'yeah, yeah, yeah, sure, take a moment. Say: "Can I get back to you on that one?"; "Let me have a think.' Just buy yourself time. Most people don't mind. By the time you have decided it's a "no", the message will have already got through that you're not keen, and it won't feel so 1) _____. You might worry that if you turn down a group activity that they're all going to 2) _____ you off when you're not there: definitely, if they think you're lying, or you're known for 3) _____ out at the last minute, they will be 4) _____ you off. But if you're straightforward, there's not much to say except: "X is always being clear about his/her needs and preferences, in a timely manner."

Your doctor: I'm about to perform a medical examination of an intimate nature; do you mind if five student-doctors come and watch?

Many people feel 5) _____ by the medical profession, and others feel they have a civic duty to be guinea pigs, since how else are students supposed to learn? Yet having an audience in any kind of medical examination is not the same as 6) _____ from honking a learner driver, and there are any number of reasons why you might not want that. Just think: there are other patients, many of whom won't mind at all. It's your body and your choice, after all!



The Elegant English Club

C1 & C2