

'When would suit you?'

STARTER

How well can you talk about times and dates in English? Try this quiz and compare your answers with a partner's. Then check your answers in the key.

- 1 Which of the time expressions are not possible in English?
 - a 2 p.m.
 - b 2 o'clock p.m.
 - c 2 p.m. in the afternoon
 - d 2 o'clock in the afternoon
- 2 How do you say the following times in English?
 - a 6.30
 - b 10.15
 - c 3.45
 - d 0.00
 - e 12.00
- 3 What does the date 01.02.06 mean to:
 - a an American person?
 - b a British person?
- 4 Here are some ways to say the date 28 May 2005. Which are not possible in English?
 - a the twenty-eighth of May, two thousand and five
 - b the twenty-eighth of May, two thousand five
 - c May twenty-eighth, two thousand and five
 - d the twenty-eighth May, two thousand and five
 - e the twenty-eight of May, two thousand and five



If you had trouble with this quiz, then refer to the *Numbers, dates, times, symbols* page of the MultiROM.

- 1 Simon Mellor works at London Bank in Frankfurt. Look at his diary for next week, then listen and write in the appointment that he makes.

Monday	
Tuesday	9-5 KPMG meeting
Wednesday	
Thursday	4 pm telephone conference with US office
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	



British English	American English
diary	planner
mobile (phone)	cell (phone)
half (past) two	half past two

2 Listen again and complete the table with suitable sentences and questions from the dialogue.

SUGGESTING A MEETING OR AN APPOINTMENT

I was wondering if you might have time to meet me while I'm in town.

SAYING IF A TIME IS CONVENIENT OR NOT

ASKING ABOUT OR SUGGESTING A TIME OR PLACE

CONFIRMING AN ARRANGEMENT

Now add these useful sentences and questions to the table above.

Could we schedule a meeting for next month?

OK, so that's 2 p.m. in the conference room.

Yes, I'm free then.

What about Thursday?

Where would be the best place to meet?

Do you have time to meet tomorrow?

3 Work with a partner. Use the table in exercise 2 to practise a dialogue.

A

Answer the phone.

Time is inconvenient. Suggest another time.

Agree. Suggest a place to meet.

Say goodbye.

B

Suggest a meeting and a time to meet.

Time is inconvenient. Suggest another time.

Agree and confirm the details.

TALKING ABOUT ARRANGEMENTS

We usually use the present continuous with a future time expression to talk about arrangements.

I'm flying in on Monday morning.

And then I'm having dinner with my client in the evening.



- 4 One of Alexa's clients in Frankfurt calls Hilary, Alexa's personal assistant. Look at the extract from Alexa's diary below and use the verbs in the box to complete the dialogue. Then listen to check your answer.

meet • come • have • fly • meet • come • have

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
7am			
8am	8.10 fly to Frankfurt		
9am			
10am			meeting with Simon
11am			
12am	meeting with Yves Gainsbourg	lunch with James Copeland	
1pm			meeting with Helmut Fischer
2pm			
3pm			
4pm			
5pm			
6pm			6.45 fly to London
7pm	dinner with George (check)	dinner with Zlatka	
8pm			
9pm			
10pm			



- Hilary JPL Consulting. Hilary Wilkins speaking.
- Anna Hello Hilary. This is Anna Roth from Frankfurt. Is Alexa there?
- Hilary I'm afraid she isn't. Can I help at all?
- Anna Well, a colleague told me that Alexa is coming ¹ to Frankfurt next week. I'd like to see her while she's here, if she has time.
- Hilary OK. Well, let me look at her schedule and we'll figure something out. When would suit you best?
- Anna I'm pretty flexible. Maybe you can tell me when she's free?
- Hilary Let me see. OK, so she is coming ² to Frankfurt first thing on Monday morning. Then she is meeting ³ a client at 12. In the evening she is having ⁴ dinner with a friend.
- Anna Hmm. Sounds like she's quite busy. What about Tuesday?
- Hilary Well, she's free on Tuesday morning. But then she is having ⁵ lunch with a colleague at 1 and she is meeting ⁶ someone in the evening.
- Anna OK. And Wednesday?
- Hilary That's pretty full. She has a couple of meetings during the day then she is flying ⁷ back to London in the evening.
- Anna OK. Well, maybe you can pencil me in on Tuesday morning. Say, 10 o'clock?

Hilary Ten o'clock on Tuesday. OK, I'll double-check that with Alexa and send you a quick email to confirm the meeting.
 Anna Wonderful. Thanks for your help.
 Hilary You're welcome. Bye now.

Now work with a partner and ask each other about your appointments for this week or next week.

5 Complete the time expressions. Use *in, on, at*, or \emptyset (= no preposition).

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1 <u>on</u> Monday | 6 ____ last night | 11 ____ 10 o'clock |
| 2 \emptyset tomorrow | 7 ____ next week | 12 ____ midnight |
| 3 ____ the morning | 8 ____ March 17th | 13 ____ March |
| 4 ____ Friday morning | 9 ____ the weekend | 14 ____ 1990 |
| 5 ____ yesterday evening | 10 ____ Christmas | 15 ____ the evening |

SMALL TALK

When we call someone we know, we usually make a little bit of small talk before we start talking business.

Here are some typical telephone small talk questions.

How are things in [name of town] / at [name of firm]?

Are things busy with you?

What have you been up to? (=What have you been doing recently?)

How is the weather there?

How was your holiday / your trip to [name of place]?

How is [name of husband/wife/partner] / are the kids?

We usually mark the change from small talk to business with a signal word like *listen* or *anyway*, possibly followed by the name of the person we are talking to.

Listen Frank, I was **actually** calling about ...

Anyway Uta, I **actually** wanted to ask you if ...

6 Match the small talk questions and answers.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 How are things in Paris? | a Nothing much, apart from work, to be honest. It's been really hectic here. |
| 2 How's the weather in Glasgow? | b Very well, thanks. The oldest one has just started school. |
| 3 How was your holiday in Spain? | c Wet, as usual! |
| 4 How are the kids? | d It's not too bad, actually. But last month was a nightmare. |
| 5 What have you been up to? | e Very nice. We had a great time. |
| 6 Are things busy with you? | f Great, I made lots of contacts. |
| 7 How did the conference go? | g Oh, you know what it's like. Same old thing as always. |

- 7 Work with a partner. First write down three 'small talk' questions (try to make them relevant to your partner). Then follow the steps below to make a phone call. Remember to use signal words like *so* and *well* to show when you want to move from one stage of the conversation to the next.

A

Answer the phone.

Respond. Ask small talk question.

Respond. Ask follow-up question
(if appropriate).

B

Say hello. Say your name.

Respond. Ask small talk question.

Respond. Start talking about business.



- 8 It is now Monday morning and Alexa is calling Simon's personal assistant, Thorsten Hofmeister. Listen and tick the sentences you hear.



- 1 I'm afraid something has come up. ☐
- 2 I'm afraid I have to reschedule our appointment. ☐
- 3 One of my clients has cancelled our appointment ... ☐
- 4 One of my clients has brought forward our appointment ... ☐
- 5 So I wanted to ask Simon if we could meet a bit earlier ... ☐
- 6 So I wanted to ask Simon if we could postpone our meeting ... ☐
- 7 Just let me know if there are any more changes. ☐
- 8 Just give me a call if there are any more changes. ☐

Simon - Alexa Johnston called



Listen again and complete Thorsten's message for Simon.

CHANGING AN ARRANGEMENT

If you want to change an arrangement, it is polite to give a concrete reason for doing so.

*I'm afraid **something has come up**. One of my clients has brought forward our appointment.*

The phrase *something has come up* means that something unexpected has happened and it is probably not something you can control.

Here are some ways to suggest or ask about changing an arrangement.

*So I wanted to ask you if we could meet **a bit** earlier in the morning.*

I was wondering if we could reschedule our appointment.

*Could we **possibly** postpone the presentation?*

Would it be possible to meet a bit later?

9 Complete the sentences with words from the box.

bit • changed • delayed • lasted • missed • possible • possibly • postponed • wanted • wondering

- I was _____ if we could meet on Friday instead. My client has _____ our schedule.
- I _____ to ask if we could meet tomorrow instead of today. I've _____ my flight and I'm afraid I'm going to arrive very late.
- Could we _____ cancel our appointment? My meeting _____ longer than I expected.
- Could we meet a _____ later? I'm afraid my customer has _____ our meeting.
- Would it be _____ to reschedule our meeting? My train has been _____.



10 It is now 8.50 a.m. on Tuesday and Alexa is calling Simon again. Listen to the conversation. Why is Alexa calling?

Listen again and complete the phrases.

I'm actually still _____¹ for the train so I'm afraid I _____² be a few minutes late.

Sorry, you're _____³ up a little. I didn't _____⁴ that last part.

I'll see you when I _____⁵ you.

I should be there by 9.15 at the _____⁶, but I'll call you again if there are any more _____⁷.

I think I'm _____⁸ the connection. I'd _____⁹ go.



11 Look at these phrases which are typical for mobile phone calls. Match the questions with the answers. Sometimes more than one answer is possible.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Where are you? | a You're breaking up a little. Would you like to try calling me again later? |
| 2 Is this a good time to talk? | b Yes, I am. I just lost the connection for a second. |
| 3 Have you got a couple of minutes? | c I'm on the train. |
| 4 Can you hear me? | d I'm afraid I'm in a meeting at the moment. Can we talk later? |
| 5 Are you still there? | e Sure. What can I do for you? |
| 6 What was that beeping noise? | f My battery's low – we might get cut off, I'm afraid. |
| | g Not really, I'm afraid. Can I call you back later? |
| | h I'm actually in the office. You can call me on my landline. |

12 Complete the sentences with words from the box.

appointment • arrangements • date • arrange • cancel •
postpone • bring forward • date

- 1 What's the _____ today? Is it the 17th of March?
- 2 Unfortunately I have to _____ the meeting. I can't find a time when we can all meet.
- 3 I have a(n) _____ to see Ms Fraser.
- 4 They told me that the conference room is already booked for 2 p.m. and asked if we could _____ the meeting to 10 a.m. Is that OK for you?
- 5 The department secretary made all the _____ for my trip.
- 6 I have a(n) _____ with the new guy in purchasing tonight. We're going to see the new Tarantino movie.
- 7 It seems like a lot of people are ill or on holiday this week. Why don't we _____ the presentation until next week?
- 8 I'm calling to _____ a time to meet next week.

13 Work with a partner to make three phone calls. Look at the Useful Phrases below before you look at your 'diary' and the instructions in the Partner Files.

PARTNER FILES

Partner A File 6, p. 49
Partner B File 6, p. 51

USEFUL PHRASES

Making an arrangement

I was wondering if you might have time to meet next week.

What day/When would suit you?

Can we fix a meeting for Tuesday?

How about Monday morning?

Shall we say nine o'clock at my office?

Changing an appointment

I'm calling about our appointment.

I'm afraid something has come up.

Saying you will be late

I'm afraid my meeting has taken longer than I expected.

I might be a few minutes late.

I should be there by 3.15 at the latest, but I'll call you again if there are any more delays.

I wanted to ask you if we could postpone/bring forward our meeting.

Could we possibly reschedule/cancel our appointment?

14 Put the words in the right order to make sentences with expressions from this unit.

- 1 has something I'm up afraid come .
- 2 the appointment she MD an has with .
- 3 few a late might I be late minutes .
- 4 New York Saturday I'm to flying on .
- 5 all tied I'm up day .
- 6 free afternoon Wednesday should be I on .

OUTPUT

Have mobile phones made our lives easier, or are they just annoying and unnecessary? Listen to four speakers and match what they say to the pictures. Which opinion(s) do you agree with?

AUDIO
23-26



AUDIO
23-26

Listen again and complete the phrases.

Speaker 1
Mobile phones can be _____,
but I don't like the fact that people
can always _____ me.

Speaker 3
I hate mobile phones! I think they're one of the
most annoying _____ ever. And people
make so many pointless _____ now.

Speaker 2
Surely they can let their _____
pick up and then listen to any
_____ later.

Speaker 4
Now I never need to worry about being late
for an _____; if I'm stuck in traffic,
I just call and let the person _____.

OVER TO YOU

What do you think should be the rules of mobile phone etiquette? Make a list of do's and don'ts and discuss it with the class.