

Can you tell me what this is / does / is for?



Language focus

Use **Can you tell me what this is / does / is for?** to ask someone to explain the function of something.

Can you tell me what this button is for?

Questions beginning with **Can you tell me ... ?** are a less direct and more polite way of asking someone something.

1 Choose the correct words to complete the dialogues.

1 Can you tell me what a screwdriver *do* / *is for*?

It's for turning screws.

2 Can you tell me what *is for* / *this is*?

It's a spanner. It's for holding and turning nuts.

3 Can you tell me what a drill *is for* / *this is*?

It's for making holes.

4 Can you tell me what this machine *does* / *do*?

It makes yoghurt.

5 Can you tell me what a lever *this is* / *does*?

It operates a machine.

6 Can you tell me what a saw *for* / *is for*?

It's for cutting wood.

2 Complete the questions with the words from the box.

tell me for you does is

- 1 Can you tell me what this is?
- 2 Can you tell me what this tool for?
- 3 Can you tell me what this lever is ?
- 4 Can you tell me what this machine ?
- 5 Can you tell what this switch is for?
- 6 Can you me what this button is for?



3 Match questions 1–6 in Activity 2 with answers a–f.

a	It's just a light switch. It's for turning the light on and off. Nothing special.	_____
b	This lever is for starting that machine.	_____
c	It translates things perfectly. It's a language machine.	_____
d	This? No, I can't tell you anything about it. It's top secret.	1
e	This tool is very special. It's for, um ... Do you know, I can't remember.	_____
f	Oh, this button is for increasing the temperature in the building.	_____

4 Complete the questions with *do*, *does* or *for*.

- 1 Can you tell me what this is for? It's for making bread.
- 2 Can you tell me what this machine is ? It's for heating liquids.
- 3 Can you tell me what this machine ? It cleans tools.
- 4 Can you tell me what these machines ? They regulate the temperature.
- 5 Can you tell me what this ? It cuts cheese into blocks.
- 6 Can you tell me what this is ? It's for keeping things clean.
- 7 Can you tell me what these ? They hold everything in place.
- 8 Can you tell me what this is ? It's for mixing chemicals.