

How to ask for something

In this lesson you will learn polite and more direct ways of asking for things.

Starter

- 1 What do you often ask the following people for?
 - a boss
 - a bank manager
 - a customer
 - a colleague
 - a supplier
- 2 Talk about the last time you asked these people for these things. Did anything unusual happen?



Expressions



- 1.1
- 1 Listen to the conversation and answer the questions.
 - 1 Who are the speakers?
 - 2 What do they ask for?
 - 3 Who is polite? Who makes demands? Why?

dealing with people

Speaking

- 1 Make a suitable request for the following situations. Try to use phrases from Expressions and the Language box. Your teacher will respond to your requests.
 - 1 You ordered twenty colour cartridges for your printer. Unfortunately, you received black cartridges instead. Call the supplier and ask them to correct the order.
 - 2 You ask your boss if you can have the morning off next Friday because you need to sign some papers at the bank.
 - 3 You ask for a return train ticket to Oxford at the ticket office.
 - 4 Your colleague keeps forgetting to finish the report you have both been working on. It needs to be sent to head office today. You call him to help him remember.

- 1.2
- 2 Listen to four conversations role-playing situations 1-4. Compare them to your requests.



business one : one

Hint

Be careful with pronunciation when making requests:
Polite requests are made with high intonation
(the voice goes up).
Demanding requests are made with lower intonation
(the voice goes down).

- 2 Look at the extracts from the conversation. Complete them with the phrases used for asking for something.

- 1 Hello, I _____ speak to Susan Crawley, please.
- 2 Would you _____ me a duplicate?
- 3 Now we'd _____ pay for the computers.
- 4 Do you _____ wait until next month?
- 5 We _____ pay before the end of June.
- 6 If we _____ payment by then, _____ we'll have to send someone round to pick up the computers.

- 3 Look at the extracts in 2 again. Mark them polite (P) or demanding (D). Then explain your decision to your teacher.

Writing

- 1 You have received the following note from your boss. Write an email to the travel agency requesting information for his trip.

Hi
I need some info from El Corte Inglés Travel Agency. I'm going to Milan Conference 10-12 Feb. Need to know:
- flights
- cost of tickets
- arrival time back here in Madrid.
Would you mind finding out for me?
Thanks
Jack

Look

Look again at listening script 1.1 and 1.2 on page 111. Find other examples of these structures.

Language box

We can use *would like* in different ways to ask people for something:

I'd like a cup of tea, please.
I'd like to phone home, if you don't mind.
We'd like you to send the cheque today.

The following verbs can also use the verb + object + infinitive pattern.

| | | | |
|--------|------|--------|------|
| advise | ask | expect | need |
| remind | tell | warn | |

We would ask you to pay in full by 1st May.
We have warned them to pay promptly.

Remember to use *-ing* after *Would you mind*.

Would you mind opening the window?
Not ~~Would you mind to open the window?~~

Lesson record

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 3 new words from this lesson | 3 useful phrases from this lesson |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

| | |
|---------|---------|
| 1 _____ | 1 _____ |
| 2 _____ | 2 _____ |
| 3 _____ | 3 _____ |

Things to remember

