

## A

## Starting a phone conversation

The call on the left is between two friends: Joe and Lily. When British people answer the phone at home, they usually just say 'hello'. The call on the right is a more formal business call.

JOE: Hello?

LILY: **Is that** Joe?

JOE: Yeah.

LILY: Hi. **It's** Lily.

RECEPTIONIST: Good morning. Chalfont Electronics.

PAUL SHARP: Oh, **could I speak to** Jane Gordon, please?

RECEPTIONIST: Yes. **Who's calling**, please?

PAUL SHARP: **My name is** Paul Sharp from Bexel Plastics.

RECEPTIONIST: Right, Mr Sharp. **I'm putting you through** [I'm connecting you] ... (pause) ...

JANE GORDON: Hello?

PAUL SHARP: Mrs Gordon?

JANE GORDON: **Speaking**. [Yes, this is Mrs Gordon.]

## Common mistakes

We say: **Is that** Joe? (NOT Are you Joe? or Is it Joe?)

And we say: **It's** Lily. (NOT I am Lily or Here is Lily.)

## B

## Problems on the phone



I tried to **ring** you this morning [phone you] but I think you were **on the phone** to your mother [using the phone].



I think I **dialled** [made a phone call to a particular number] **the wrong number** (e.g. 451 and not 351) this morning – I got a very angry person on the phone!



I **gave her a ring** this morning [phoned her], but I couldn't **get through** [make contact / speak to her]; the line was **engaged** [being used, someone was on the phone].



I **left a message** (e.g. Please ring me) on Dan's **answerphone** as he was **out** [not there; *syn* not in], but he never **phoned me back** [returned my phone call], so I don't know if he got my message.

## C

## Phone numbers

Q: What's your **home** phone number? (also **landline**)

A: 603 884

Q: What's your **mobile** number?

A: 07723 259369

Q: What's the **emergency** number for the police, fire or ambulance?

A: 999

Q: What's the **dialling** code for the UK when you are phoning from Hungary?

A: 0044

## D

## Mobile phones and texting

Many people use their mobile **mostly/mainly** [most of the time] for **texting** [sending short written messages from one phone to another]. Do you **text** your friends and family all the time?

These are common text **abbreviations** [letters which represent words].

ASAP = as soon as possible

CU = see you

BF = boyfriend (GF = girlfriend)

IMO = **in my opinion** [this is what I think]

B4 = before

FYI = for your information

2DAY = today

U = you

2MORO = tomorrow

THX = thanks

Y = why?

LOL = laughing out loud

PLS = please

X = kiss

## Exercises

### 53.1 Answer the questions.

- What are two more ways of saying *I called him*?  
*I phoned him.*
- You phoned Tom but weren't able to speak to him. What are three possible reasons for this?  
.....  
.....  
.....
- You can ring a phone number. What are three other numbers you can ring?  
..... number ..... number ..... number

### 53.2 Complete the phone conversations.

- A: Hello?  
B: Good morning. Could I <sup>1</sup> *..speak to..* Luke James?  
A: Who's <sup>2</sup> ....., please?  
B: <sup>3</sup> ..... Liam Matthews.  
A: One moment, please. I'm <sup>4</sup> ..... you through.  
C: Hello?  
B: <sup>5</sup> ..... Mr James?  
C: <sup>6</sup> .....  
  
A: Good morning. Boulding Limited. Can I help you?  
B: Yes. I'm trying to contact Oliver Fallow. He left a <sup>7</sup> ..... on my <sup>8</sup> .....  
A: I see. Well, I'm afraid Mr Fallow's <sup>9</sup> ..... at the moment. Can I ask him to  
<sup>10</sup> ..... you ..... later?  
  
A: Hello.  
B: Hi. <sup>11</sup> ..... Carlos?  
A: Yeah, speaking.  
B: Hi Carlos. <sup>12</sup> ..... Serena.  
A: Oh hello. I was expecting you to ring last night.  
B: I did, but I couldn't get <sup>13</sup> .....; the line was <sup>14</sup> .....  
A: Oh yes, I'm sorry about that. I was <sup>15</sup> ..... the phone to my brother for about an hour.

### 53.3 What do these text abbreviations mean?

- |                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1 GRT = <i>great</i> | 6 FYI = ..... |
| 2 X = .....          | 7 LOL = ..... |
| 3 CU = .....         | 8 THX = ..... |
| 4 IMO = .....        | 9 BF = .....  |
| 5 ASAP = .....       | 10 U = .....  |

### 53.4 Over to you

Answer the questions. If possible, compare your answers with someone else.

- How often do you use a mobile phone? What do you use it for? How often do you text people? Who do you text?
- In your country, what is the emergency number for the police, fire brigade or ambulance?
- From your country, what's the international dialling code for the United Kingdom?
- How do you feel about people who use their mobile phone on a train?