

Phone Calls in English: Useful Phrases

Level: A2

Practise opening a call, asking for someone, leaving a message and ending politely. Listen to the short dialogue before trying the exercises.

Leaving a message

Receptionist: Good morning, Green Travel.

Leo: Hi, this is Leo.

Leo: Can I speak to Ana, please?

Receptionist: She's not here right now.

Receptionist: Can I take a message?

Leo: Could she call me back?

Receptionist: What's your number?

Leo: It's 555-0123.

Receptionist: Thanks for calling.

Opening a call

Good morning, Green Travel.	Answer a call with the name of your workplace.	"Good morning, Green Travel." "Hello."
Hi, this is Leo.	Introduce yourself on the phone.	"Hi, this is Leo." "Hello, Leo."
Can I speak to Ana, please?	Ask to speak to a person.	"Can I speak to Ana, please?" "One moment."
Who's calling, please?	Ask for the caller's name.	"Who's calling, please?" "It's Leo."
One moment, please.	Ask the caller to wait briefly.	"One moment, please." "Of course."
Hold on, please.	Ask someone to wait on the line.	"Hold on, please." "Okay."
Speaking.	Say this when you are the person requested.	"Can I speak to Ana?" "Speaking."

Messages and problems

She's not here right now.	Say a person is unavailable.	"She's not here right now." "Okay."
Can I take a message?	Offer to write down a message.	"Can I take a message?" "Yes, please."
Can I leave a message?	Ask to give a message for someone.	"Can I leave a message?" "Of course."
I'll call back later.	Say you will phone again.	"I'll call back later." "Okay."
Could she call me back?	Ask a person to return your call.	"Could she call me back?" "Yes."

What's your number?	Ask for a telephone number.	"What's your number?" "It's 555-0123."
Could you repeat that, please?	Ask someone to say it again.	"Could you repeat that, please?" "Sure."

Ending a call

I can't hear you well.	Say the sound is unclear.	"I can't hear you well." "I'll call again."
The connection is bad.	Describe a poor phone signal.	"The connection is bad." "I know."
I'll call you again.	Say you will phone once more.	"I'll call you again." "Okay."
Thanks for calling.	Thank the caller.	"Thanks for calling." "No problem."
Talk to you later.	End a friendly call.	"Talk to you later." "Bye."
Bye for now.	Say goodbye at the end of a call.	"Bye for now." "Bye."
Sorry, you have the wrong number.	Tell a caller they reached someone else.	"Sorry, you have the wrong number." "Oh, sorry."

Exercise 1: Match the phrase and meaning

Match each English item with its meaning.

- Good morning, Green Travel. → _____
- Can I speak to Ana, please? → _____
- One moment, please. → _____
- She's not here right now. → _____
- I'll call back later. → _____
- I can't hear you well. → _____

Answer a call with the name of your workplace. Ask the caller to wait briefly. Ask to speak to a person. Say a person is unavailable. Say the sound is unclear. Say you will phone again.

Exercise 2: Choose the right English

Choose the English phrase or word for each meaning.

- You answer a call at work. What could you say?
a) Good morning, Green Travel. b) Bye for now. c) I'll call back later.
- You want to speak to Ana. What do you ask?
a) Can I take a message? b) Can I speak to Ana, please? c) Who's calling, please?
- The caller needs to wait on the line. What do you say?
a) Speaking. b) Thanks for calling. c) Hold on, please.

10. Ana is away and you offer to write a message. What do you say?
a) Can I take a message? b) Can I leave a message? c) I'll call you again.
11. You plan to phone again later. What do you say?
a) Sorry, you have the wrong number. b) I'll call back later. c) What's your number?
12. The caller sounds too quiet. What do you say?
a) The connection is bad. b) Bye for now. c) I can't hear you well.

Exercise 3: Complete the English

Type the missing word.

13. Can I ___ to Ana, please? (ask to talk to a person on the phone)
14. Who's ___, please? (ask for the caller's identity)
15. Hold ___, please. (ask the caller to wait)
16. Ana is away. Can I take a ___? (offer to write down what the caller says)
17. I'll call ___ later when Ana is here. (say you will phone again)
18. The connection is ___. I can't hear you well. (describe a poor phone signal)

Exercise 4: Understand the dialogue

Choose the answer from the conversation.

19. What does Leo want Ana to do?
a) Call him back b) Send an email c) Meet him today

Answer key

Exercise 1: Match the phrase and meaning

1. Good morning, Green Travel. → Answer a call with the name of your workplace.
2. Can I speak to Ana, please? → Ask to speak to a person.
3. One moment, please. → Ask the caller to wait briefly.
4. She's not here right now. → Say a person is unavailable.
5. I'll call back later. → Say you will phone again.
6. I can't hear you well. → Say the sound is unclear.

Exercise 2: Choose the right English

7. a) Good morning, Green Travel.
8. b) Can I speak to Ana, please?
9. c) Hold on, please.
10. a) Can I take a message?
11. b) I'll call back later.
12. c) I can't hear you well.

Exercise 3: Complete the English

13. speak / talk
14. calling / speaking
15. on
16. message
17. back / you
18. bad / poor / weak

Exercise 4: Understand the dialogue

19. a) Call him back