

1.4 Speaking and writing

GOALS ■ Deal with problems on the phone ■ Write an informal email

Vocabulary & Listening dealing with problems on the phone

- 1 Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.
 - 1 On average, how many phone calls do you make in a day?
 - 2 Do you generally prefer phoning, Skyping or another form of communication? Why?
 - 3 What things can go wrong when you speak on the phone?



- 2 1.5))) Listen to four phone conversations in which a problem occurred. Match conversations 1–4 to problems a–d.
 - a an unclear telephone line
 - b one of the speakers is distracted
 - c an unwanted sales call
 - d a friend wants to talk for too long

- 3 1.6))) Listen and complete the sentences in the Language for speaking box.

LANGUAGE FOR SPEAKING dealing with problems on the phone

Getting rid of unwanted callers

- 1 I don't ^a _____ sales calls.
- 2 Would you remove my ^b _____ from your database?

Ending a conversation politely

- 3 It's been great ^c _____ to you.
- 4 I'd ^d _____ get off the phone.
- 5 I'll let you get on.
- 6 I've got a ^e _____ of work to do.
- 7 I won't take up any more of your time.

Dealing with distractions

- 8 Just ^f _____ with me a moment.
- 9 I'm afraid you've ^g _____ me at a bad time.
- 10 Could you just hold the line?

Dealing with a bad phone line

- 11 The ^h _____ isn't too good here.
- 12 You're breaking up ...
- 13 I'm ⁱ _____ you again.
- 14 Could you call me back on my ^j _____?

Note: We often use the word *Anyway*, ... to signal that we want to end a conversation.

- 4 1.6))) Listen again and repeat the sentences.
- 5 **TASK** Work with a partner. You are going to role-play a phone conversation using the phrases in exercise 3. If possible, sit back to back to imitate the conditions of a real phone call.

Student A

- 1 It's 8 p.m. You are a salesperson (decide what you are selling, e.g. a mobile phone). Call Student B and try to sell your product. Try to keep them on the phone for at least two minutes by explaining the benefits of the product. Remember your boss said you need to increase your sales and you're feeling under pressure.

Student B

- 1 It's 8 p.m. and you are at home watching a film. The phone rings. You are expecting a call from your aunt in Canada. You need to speak to her to give her some important family news. Answer the phone.

You are going to do two more role-plays. Student A, turn to page 126. Student B, turn to page 132.

Writing an informal email giving news

- 6 Read the email and answer the questions.
- 1 Are Noemi and Sofia old friends, recent friends or work colleagues?
 - 2 The email is written in an informal style. What features of the email show this?

Sent: TUESDAY 12.29

Hi Noemi,

Seems like **ages** since we've been **in touch!** Hope all's well with you. All's well here but life's **pretty** busy, as ever. I've changed jobs. Still teaching art and design, but at a different college. I've been working there for six months now. I love it, but it's hard work. **We're off** on a study trip to Amsterdam at the end of the month. Should be fun. I've never been to Amsterdam before.

The other thing that's been keeping me busy is the ukulele. The band that I play in has suddenly become really popular locally and we've been playing **loads of** gigs. Mainly just small ones, but last weekend we played in front of 300 people at a festival. Fame at last! ;) Is the ukulele as popular in Spain as it is here?



Anyway, the really big news is that my sister is pregnant and she's just found out that she's having twins! She and Tom are **over the moon**, but quite nervous, too, as you can imagine. And I'm going to be an aunt for the first time. Can't wait!

So, enough about me. How are things with you? **What have you been up to?** Still living in the same flat? I'd love to come over to Madrid to visit you some time. Maybe during the summer holidays – I'll have **plenty of time on my hands** then.

It would be really great to **catch up** properly before that. Shall we try and speak next week? Are you on Skype?

Speak soon, hopefully.

Lots of love,

Sofia

- 7 Read the information about ellipsis in the Language for writing box. Find examples of ellipsis in the email in exercise 6. Decide if they are examples of type 1 or type 2.

LANGUAGE FOR WRITING ellipsis (leaving out words) for informal writing

In informal writing (and speaking) we often leave out words at the beginning of a sentence. This is known as ellipsis.

Common types of ellipsis include:

- 1 leaving out the pronoun:
It sounds amazing. → *Sounds amazing.*
- 2 leaving out the pronoun and auxiliary verb:
It's great to hear from you. → *Great to hear from you.*

- 8 Make these sentences more informal by leaving out words at the beginning.
- 1 I'm just writing to say hello.
 - 2 It was great to see you last week.
 - 3 I hope to hear from you soon.
 - 4 Are you going anywhere this summer?
 - 5 I'll see you in a week's time.
 - 6 I miss you!
- 9 As well as ellipsis, informal writing contains a lot of colloquial vocabulary. Match the highlighted words or phrases in the email to their more formal equivalents, 1–9.
- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 a lot of/many | 6 exchange news |
| 2 in contact | 7 very |
| 3 extremely happy | 8 lots of free time |
| 4 a long time | 9 What have you been doing? |
| 5 We're going away | |
- 10 **TASK** Write an email to a friend or family member that you haven't seen for a year. Use phrases from the email in exercise 6. Include information about the following.
- things you have done during the year
 - things you have been doing recently
 - things you are planning to do
 - news about other members of the family
- 11a Exchange emails with a partner. Has your partner used ...?
- fixed informal phrases for opening and closing the email
 - a chatty informal style
 - correct grammar, vocabulary and spelling
- b Find out more about the news in the email and discuss with your partner.