

CEFR A1 · TEENS (11–16)

On the Phone: *Can I speak to...?*

Ring ring! Someone is calling. Learn the phrases for **talking on the phone** in English — how to answer, how to ask for someone, and how to leave a message!

⌚ 45 minutes

📞 Telephone phrases

📱 On the Phone

Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

1

WARM-UP**Think before you start**

1. How do you answer the phone in your language? What's the first word?
2. Who do you call most often? A friend? Your family?
3. Do you prefer to call people or to send a message? Why?
4. What do you say when you want to talk to someone, but a different person answers?

2

LANGUAGE FOCUS**Starting a phone call**

A call has two people: the person who **answers** and the person who **calls**. Here is how each one starts:

ANSWER **Hello?** / Hello, this is Ana speaking.

CALLER **Hi, can I speak to** Tom, please?

REPLY Yes, **speaking!** / Just a moment, please.

3 VOCABULARY IN ACTION

Useful phone phrases

 Can I speak to...?	 Who's calling, please?	 This is... speaking.	 Just a moment, please.
 Sorry, I can't hear you.	 Can I leave a message?	 Can you call back later?	 Thanks, bye!

WHEN YOU WANT TO...	YOU SAY...
Answer the phone	Hello? / Hello, this is Sara.
Ask for a person	Can I speak to Max, please?
Say it's you	Speaking. / This is Max.
Ask who is calling	Who's calling, please?
Wait / get the person	Just a moment, please.
End the call	OK, thanks. Bye!

- to call / to phone to ring to answer a message a number busy back later hang on

4 KEY VOCABULARY

Words you'll meet in the story

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
call <i>VERB / NOUN</i>	to phone someone; a phone conversation	<i>I call my grandma every Sunday.</i>
ring <i>VERB</i>	(of a phone) to make a sound for a call	<i>My phone is ringing!</i>
answer <i>VERB</i>	to pick up the phone when it rings	<i>Can you answer the phone, please?</i>
speaking <i>PHRASE</i>	a way to say "it's me" on the phone	<i>"Is that Ana?" — "Yes, speaking!"</i>
message <i>NOUN</i>	words you leave for someone not there	<i>Can I leave a message for Tom?</i>
moment <i>NOUN</i>	a very short time	<i>Just a moment, please.</i>
busy <i>ADJ.</i>	(of a line) already in use; not free	<i>The line is busy. I'll call back.</i>
wrong number <i>PHRASE</i>	when you call the wrong person	<i>Sorry, you have the wrong number.</i>
hang on <i>PHRASE</i>	wait a short time (informal)	<i>Hang on — I'll get her.</i>
call back <i>PHRASE</i>	to phone again later	<i>She's out. Can you call back at six?</i>

Ring, Ring! *three phone calls, three little stories*

The phone is ringing again! At the Garcia house, the afternoon is busy. Three phone calls, three different people, and a few funny moments. Read and look for the phone phrases!

Call 1 — A friend for Lucas

It's four o'clock, and the phone **rings**. Mrs Garcia **answers** it. "**Hello?**" she says. A boy's voice says, "Hello, can I **speak to** Lucas, please?" "Of course," says Mrs Garcia. "Who's calling, please?" "It's his friend, Marco." "Just a **moment**, Marco," she says, and she calls upstairs: "Lucas! It's Marco for you!" Lucas runs down and takes the phone. "Hi Marco! What's up?" The two friends talk about football for twenty minutes. Mrs Garcia smiles. Teenagers and their phones!

Call 2 — The wrong number

At five o'clock, the phone rings again. This time, Lucas answers. "Hello, this is Lucas **speaking**." A man's voice says, "Hello, can I speak to Dr Patel, please?" Lucas is surprised. "Dr Patel? I'm sorry, there's no Dr Patel here. I think you have the **wrong number**." "Oh, I'm so sorry!" says the man. "Is this not 555-0199?" "No," says Lucas, "this is 555-0188." "I'm very sorry to bother you," says the man. "No problem. Goodbye!" says Lucas. He puts the phone down and laughs. Wrong number — it happens to everybody!

Call 3 — A message for Dad

At six o'clock — ring, ring! — Lucas's sister, Elena, answers. "Hello?" "Good evening. Can I speak to Mr Garcia, please?" says a woman. "I'm sorry, my dad isn't here right now. He's at work. Can I take a **message**?" "Yes, please. This is Ms Romano from his office. Can you tell him the meeting is at ten o'clock tomorrow, not nine?" "Of course," says Elena. She writes it down: *Dad — meeting at 10, not 9. Ms Romano called.* "I'll give him the message," she says. "Thank you so much. Goodbye!" "Goodbye!" Elena is happy — her English on the phone is very good now.

So — don't be shy on the phone!

Three calls, three different situations: a friend, a wrong number, and a message. Talking on the phone in a new language can feel scary — you can't see the other person's face! But with a few simple phrases — *Can I speak to...?*, *Who's calling?*, *Can I take a message?* — you can do it. And remember: if you don't understand, you can always say, "Sorry, can you say that again, please?" Everybody makes mistakes on the phone. The most important thing is to try!

Editor's note: *Practice makes perfect! Call a friend and try a short conversation in English. Start with "Hello, can I speak to...?" and see how far you can go. You can do it!*

6


PRACTICE
Fill in the blanks

Complete each phone phrase with the correct word: speak, speaking, calling, message, moment, answer, wrong, back.


- 1 Hello, can I _____ to Lucas, please? *(verb)*
- 2 "Is that Ana?" — "Yes, _____ !" *(it's me)*
- 3 Who's _____, please? *(phoning)*
- 4 My dad isn't here. Can I take a _____ ? *(noun)*
- 5 Just a _____, please. *(short time)*
- 6 Can you _____ the phone? It's ringing! *(verb)*
- 7 There's no Dr Patel here. You have the _____ number. *(not right)*
- 8 She's busy now. Can you call _____ later? *(call ___ = phone again)*


7

SPEAKING
Make a phone call!

 Call your friend. Ask to speak to them. Talk about the weekend.

 Call a friend's house. A parent answers. Ask for your friend.

 You call the wrong number! Say sorry politely.

 The person isn't there. Leave a short message.

 End your call politely. (Thanks, bye!)

EXAMPLE CONVERSATION

A: Hello?

B: Hi, can I speak to Emma, please?

A: Who's calling, please?

B: It's Daniel.

A: Just a moment, Daniel... Sorry, she's not here. Can I take a message?

B: Yes, please tell her I called. Thanks, bye!

8

WRITING
Write a phone conversation (50–70 words)

Write a phone call between two people (A and B). One calls; the other answers. Use phone phrases. Try to include:

- a greeting (Hello?)
- Can I speak to...? and Who's calling?
- a problem (wrong number, not there, or busy)
- a polite ending (Thanks, bye!)

9

QUIZ

Check your understanding

1 Your phone rings. What do you say first?

- A Goodbye! B Hello?
 C Thanks! D No!

2 You want to talk to Tom. What do you say?

- A I am Tom. B Can I speak to Tom, please?
 C Tom is here. D Where is Tom go?

3 Someone asks for you. You say:

- A No, thanks. B Speaking!
 C Wrong number. D Goodbye!

4 You want to know who is on the phone. You ask:

- A How are you? B Who's calling, please?
 C How much is it? D Where are you?

5 The person is not there. You can:

- A leave a message B close the door
 C buy a phone D go home

6 You called the wrong person. You say:

- A Speaking! B Sorry, wrong number.
 C Yes, please. D Just a moment.

7 "Just a moment" means:

- A goodbye B wait a short time
 C call back D no

8 How do you end a phone call politely?

- A Hello? B Who's calling?
 C Thanks, bye! D Speaking.

✓ Answer Key — for teachers

Fill in the blanks: 1. speak 2. speaking 3. calling 4. message 5. moment 6. answer 7. wrong 8. back

Quiz: 1. B 2. B 3. B 4. B 5. A 6. B 7. B 8. C