

Part 1. Arranging a visit or a meeting



Accepting an invitation

You may need to know how to accept an invitation. Listen to the following conversation between two friends. Ben Andrews is American and William Shand is British.



Ben Andrews: Hi William. It's Ben. How are you?

William Shand: Hi Ben. Good to hear from you. How are things in the States?

Ben Andrews: Just fine, thanks. Listen, I was wondering if you would like to come and visit over summer vacation?

William Shand: I'd love to come. Thanks so much for asking me.

Ben Andrews: We'll be here the last two weeks in August, if you want to come then.

William Shand: That would be brilliant. I'll book a flight as soon as I can. You'll have to tell me how to get to your house.

Ben Andrews: Don't worry about it. I'll meet you at the airport when your flight gets in.

William Shand: Brilliant. Well, thanks again for your kind invitation. I'll really look forward to coming...



British people 'go on holiday' whilst Americans 'go on vacation'.



➔ Now practise it!

William Shand said:

– I'd love to come.

He could also have said:

- Thank you for your kind invitation.
- I'd be delighted to accept.
- Thank you so much for asking me.
- Sorry, I'm afraid I won't be able to come.
- Sorry, I can't make it.

Suggesting a meeting

Richard Prentice is talking on the phone with an American business colleague, Dave Logan. Listen to the following telephone conversation.



Richard Prentice: Hello Mr Logan. Richard Prentice here.

Dave Logan: Good morning, Mr Prentice.

Richard Prentice: I've looked at your suggestions and I like them. Can we meet sometime and discuss them?

Dave Logan: I'd be happy to meet with you.

Richard Prentice: When can you get to London?

Dave Logan: I'm free next week, if that's okay for you.

Richard Prentice: Yes, that should be fine. Let me know when you have booked your flight and we can arrange where to meet...

➔ Now practise it!

Richard Prentice said:

– Can we meet?

He could also have said:

- Can we have a meeting?
- Can I meet with you?
- Can we meet up?
- Can we get together?

Confirming arrangements

When William Shand has booked his flight, he rings his friend Ben Andrews to arrange when they will meet. Listen to the following telephone conversation.



Ben Andrews: Ben Andrews speaking.

William Shand: Hello Ben, William here.

Ben Andrews: Hello there. Have you booked your flight?

William Shand: Yes, I arrive on Tuesday 17th at three in the afternoon.

Ben Andrews: I'll pick you up at the airport then. Who are you flying with?

William Shand: European Airways. It's direct from London.

Ben Andrews: Great! I'll be in the arrivals area.

William Shand: That would be lovely.

Ben Andrews: Okay, I've noted the time in my agenda. Look forward to seeing you then.

William Shand: Me too. Bye!

➔ Now practise it!

Listen to the conversation again. This time fill in William Shand's responses yourself. Just to remind you, he arrives in the US on Tuesday 17th at three in the afternoon. He is flying with European Airways from London. You will hear what he said again after a pause, so that you can check your answers.



Americans organize their schedules in an 'agenda' or 'day planner', but British people do so in a 'diary'.

Understanding directions

Dave Logan has arrived at his hotel in London and he rings Richard Prentice for directions. Listen to the following telephone conversation.



- Dave Logan:** Hello, Richard Prentice? Dave Logan.
Richard Prentice: Good afternoon, Mr Logan. Did you have a good flight?
Dave Logan: Yes, thanks.
Richard Prentice: Good. I'm looking forward to seeing you tomorrow. Do you need directions to our office?
Dave Logan: Yes, can you tell me how to get there from the hotel? I'm at the Royal.
Richard Prentice: You need to go by underground train.
Dave Logan: How long will that take?
Richard Prentice: About 15 minutes.
Dave Logan: Where is the nearest underground station from here?
Richard Prentice: Turn left when you leave the hotel and it's just on the right.
Dave Logan: Where do I get off the underground train?
Richard Prentice: You need to take the Circle Line train to Mansion House. Our office is right opposite the station.
Dave Logan: Great. I'll see you tomorrow.

➔ Now practise it!

Dave Logan said:

- Can you tell me how to get there from the hotel?

He could also have said:

- How long will it take?
- Where is the nearest station?
- Where do I get off the train?
- Can I walk there?
- Is it far from here?



In a business situation in the UK, people are always addressed formally, using their title and surname, unless they have invited you to call them by their first name. Formal language is also used, such as 'good afternoon' or 'goodbye'.

Useful words and phrases

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|---|---|
| – I'd love to come. | – <i>J'aimerais beaucoup venir.</i> |
| – I'd be delighted to accept. | – <i>J'accepte avec plaisir.</i> |
| – I'll book a flight as soon as I can. | – <i>Je réserve un vol dès que possible.</i> |
| – Thank you for your kind invitation. | – <i>Merci pour votre aimable invitation.</i> |
| – Thanks so much for asking me. | – <i>Merci beaucoup de me l'avoir proposé.</i> |
| – You'll have to tell me how to get to your house. | – <i>Il faudra que vous m'expliquiez comment me rendre chez vous.</i> |
| – Sorry, I'm afraid I won't be able to come. | – <i>Désolé(e), je ne pourrai malheureusement pas venir.</i> |
| – I'd be happy to meet with you. | – <i>Je serais ravi de vous y retrouver.</i> |
| – I'm free next week, if that's okay for you. | – <i>Je suis libre la semaine prochaine, si cela vous convient.</i> |
| – I arrive on Tuesday 17th at three in the afternoon. | – <i>J'arrive le mardi 17 à quinze heures.</i> |
| – Can you tell me how to get there from the hotel? | – <i>Pouvez-vous m'indiquer comment m'y rendre depuis l'hôtel ?</i> |
| – Where is the nearest station? | – <i>Où se trouve la gare la plus proche ?</i> |
| – Where do I get off the train? | – <i>À quel arrêt dois-je descendre du train ?</i> |
| – How long will it take? | – <i>Combien de temps le trajet durera-t-il ?</i> |
| – Can I walk there? | – <i>Puis-je m'y rendre à pied ?</i> |