

Complaining and Criticising

Shops

Work in groups of three. I'm going to give you some different types of shop. When you hear the shop, quickly agree on a complaint, e.g. *T – Shoe shop. S – I bought these shoes yesterday and the heel's already broken.*

garage, DIY shop,	delicatessen, greengrocer,	bakery, chemist,	supermarket, boutique,	photo developers, toy shop
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(After you have read out the whole list, elicit some of the complaints.)

In your groups, choose your favourite complaint and role-play this conversation.

Student A, you are an argumentative customer.

Student B, you are an unhelpful shop assistant.

Student C, you are the manager, called to sort out the problem.

For crying out loud

In small groups, tell each other about a real complaint you have made. Did you express your misgivings in a polite but assertive way? Was your complaint properly dealt with?

Choose the most interesting complaint and write a script for it to read out to the class.

Returns

Imagine you are in a shop complaining to the sales assistant. In pairs, write a mini dialogue with the following pairs of words, e.g. *Customer – I asked for a size 12, but you gave me size 14. Assistant – I'm terribly sorry, madam. I'll get you a size 14.*

brown/black, 2 five-kilo bags /5 two – kilo bags,	satin/matt,	lager/bitter,	brown/white, 3 amp/13 amp,	a 10 Euro note/ a 20 Euro note , hamburger/fishburger
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Swap dialogues with another pair, and practise reading them.

Flat share problems

In pairs, imagine you are flat-mates. Role-play a discussion and give each other advice about how to change your behaviour, e.g. *A- You shouldn't leave your bike in the hall, it makes it dirty. B – Why don't you relax more? It's easy to clean up later.*

Student A, you are very tidy like peace and quiet, study hard, don't go out very much, usually pay the bills on time, do most of the cooking and housework.

Student B, you are very untidy, like loud music/TV, can't be bothered to study, like parties, are always broke, hate cooking and housework.

Where am I ?

In pairs, listen to my complaints. After each one, write down where I am.

1. Typical! You wait half an hour and then three come along at once! (bus stop)
2. This venison is undercooked and the Jerusalem artichokes are mushy. (restaurant)
3. You said it was just a small problem with the choke, but you've charged me for a new carburettor and brake pads. (mechanic's garage)
4. We brought Granddad here for a hip replacement and you took out his appendix. (hospital)
5. Whenever I press the mute button, it changes channel. (TV shop)
6. I was assured that it was a female, but it ate my prize goldfish. What are you going to do about it? (aquarium)
7. How can you charge me line rental when I'm pay-as-you-go? (mobile phone shop)
8. Look! It was only Valentine's day yesterday and the petals have already fallen off! (flower shop)
9. These are all blurred and there's a yellow line running through the whole lot. I know it's not the camera that's to blame. (photograph developers)
10. Excuse me. I asked for this with lemon, but no ice. (bar)

In pairs, write two more complaints. Read them out for the rest of the class to guess where you are.

Letters of complaint

Look at the following information about poor products or services.

Car \$999 (used)	Holiday \$600	Jacket \$200	EFL School
Noisy brakes Leaking sunroof Faulty indicator Backfiring	Filthy hotel No swimming pool Construction work 12- hour delay	Tear in armpit Buttons missing Lining missing Stain	30 students/class Wrong level Rude staff Cold classroom

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