

3 Could you do me a favor?

1 SNAPSHOT

Favors People Dislike Being Asked

Could you . . . ?



let me use your car



drive me to the airport



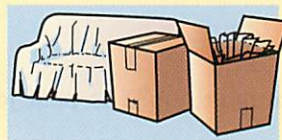
lend me some money



lend me your hairbrush



take care of my pet while I'm away



help me move into my new apartment



let me borrow your homework



let me stay at your place for a while

Source: Interviews with people between the ages of 16 and 50

Which of these favors would bother you the most? Which would bother you the least?

What are three other favors that you dislike being asked?

Imagine that a close friend asked you each of these favors. What would you say?

2 CONVERSATION Would you mind . . . ?

A Listen and practice.

Rod: Hello.

Jana: Hi, Rod. This is Jana.

Rod: Oh, hi, Jana. What's up?

Jana: I'm going to my best friend's wedding this weekend. I'd love to take some pictures for his Web site. Would you mind if I borrowed your new digital camera?

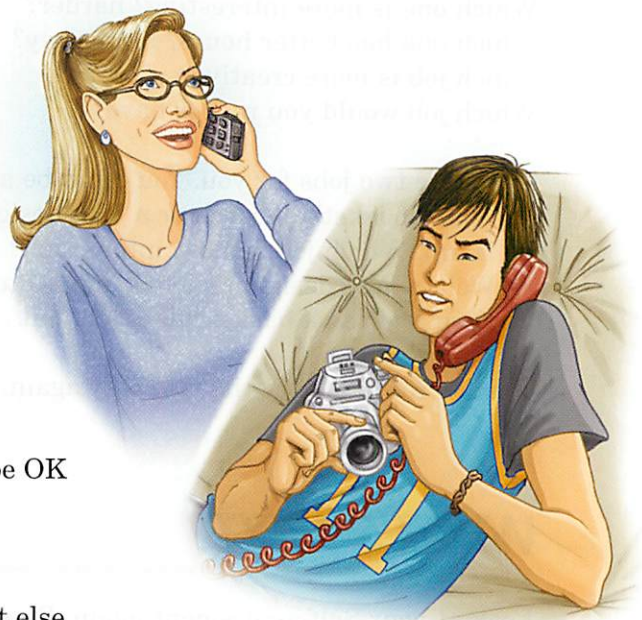
Rod: Um, no. That's OK, I guess. I don't think I'll need it for anything.

Jana: Thanks a million.

Rod: Sure. Uh, have you used a digital camera before? It's sort of complicated.

Jana: Uh-huh, sure, a couple of times. Would it be OK if I picked it up on Friday night?

Rod: Yeah, I guess so.



B Listen to two more calls Jana makes. What else does she want to borrow? Do her friends agree?

3 GRAMMAR FOCUS

Requests with modals, if clauses, and gerunds

Less formal

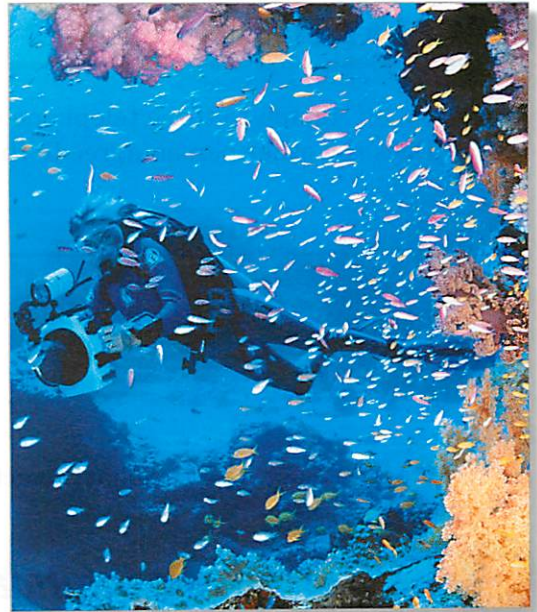


More formal

- Can I borrow your pencil?
- Could you lend me a jacket?
- Is it OK if I use your phone?
- Do you mind if I use your CD burner?
- Would it be OK if I picked it up on Friday night?
- Would you mind if I borrowed your digital camera?
- Would you mind letting me use your laptop?
- I wonder if I could borrow some money.
- I was wondering if you'd mind lending me your car.

A Make requests using these cues. Then practice with a partner. Which requests need to be more formal?

1. You want to borrow your classmate's underwater camera for a diving trip.
A: I was wondering . . .
B: Sure, that's fine. But please be careful with it.
2. You want to use your roommate's computer.
A: Is it OK . . . ?
B: You can use it, but please save my work first.
3. Your neighbor has a car. You need a ride to class.
A: . . .
B: I'd be glad to. What time?
4. You want a friend to help you move on Saturday.
A: . . .
B: I'm really sorry. I'm busy the whole weekend.
5. You want to borrow your cousin's DVD of *Spider-Man*.
A: . . .
B: Actually, I already lent it to Serena. Sorry!
6. You would like a second piece of your aunt's cherry pie.
A: . . .
B: Yes, of course! Just pass me your plate.



B Rewrite these requests to make them more formal. Then practice making your requests with a partner. Accept or decline each request.

1. Lend me some money for an espresso.
2. Take these books back to the library for me.
3. Let me wear your leather jacket to the party this weekend.
4. I'd like to borrow your cell phone to call my friend in London.
5. Can I look at that newspaper when you've finished reading it?
6. Take care of my pet rabbit while I'm on vacation.

Would you mind lending
me some money for
an espresso?

4 PRONUNCIATION *Unreleased consonants*

A Listen and practice. Notice that when /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /p/, and /b/ are followed by other consonant sounds, they are unreleased.

Could Doug **take** care of my pet tarantula?

Can you **ask** Bob to **sit** behind Kate?

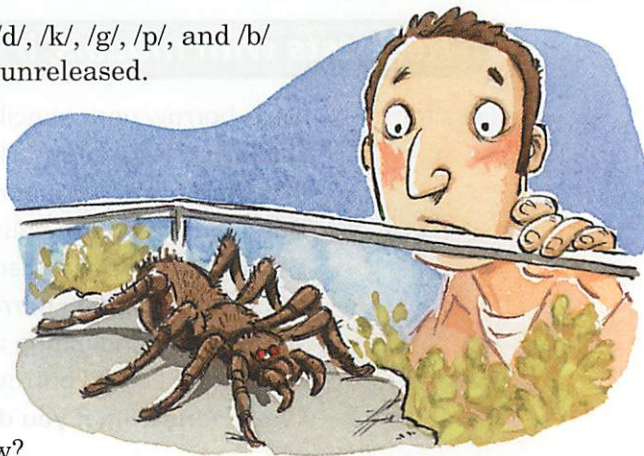
B Circle the unreleased consonants in the conversations. Listen and check. Then practice the conversations with a partner.

A: I wonder if I could borrow that book.

B: Yes, but can you take it back to Greg tomorrow?

A: Would you mind giving Albert some help moving that big bed?

B: Sorry, but my doctor said my back needs rest.



5 LISTENING *Favors*

A Listen to three telephone conversations. Write down what each caller requests. Does the other person agree to the request? Check (✓) Yes or No.

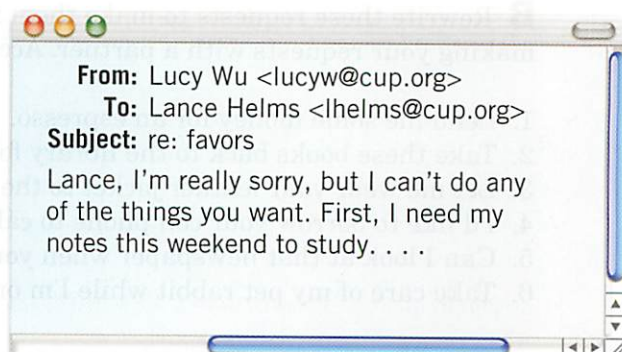
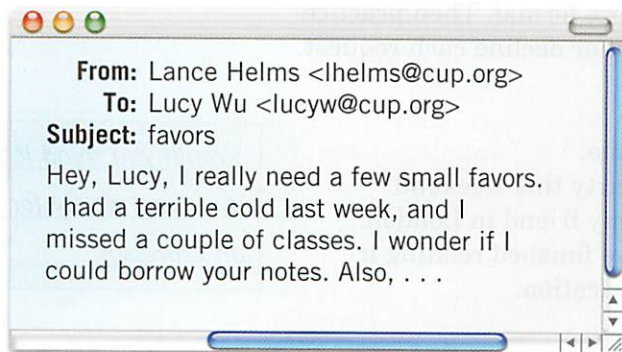
Request	Yes	No
1. Tina	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Mike	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Phil	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B *Pair work* Use the chart to act out each conversation.

6 WRITING *An informal e-mail request*

A Write an e-mail to a classmate asking for several favors. Explain why you need help.

B *Pair work* Exchange e-mails. Write a reply accepting or declining the requests.



7 INTERCHANGE 3 Borrowers and lenders

Find out how generous you are. Go to Interchange 3.

8 WORD POWER Collocations

A Which verb is *not* usually paired with each noun? Put a line through the verb and compare with a partner.

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 1. (owe / offer / do / accept) | an apology |
| 2. (do / return / make / receive) | a phone call |
| 3. (return / do / ask for / make) | a favor |
| 4. (receive / accept / turn down / offer) | an invitation |
| 5. (make / deny / offer / refuse) | a request |
| 6. (deny / receive / give / refuse) | a gift |
| 7. (receive / return / do / give) | a compliment |

B Pair work Choose five of the collocations in part A. Then take turns using them to ask and answer questions.

A: When was the last time you owed someone an apology?

B: Well, just yesterday I spilled my soda all over you!



9 PERSPECTIVES Could you tell Jeff...?

A Many people talked to Jeff's assistant while Jeff was away at lunch today. Listen to their messages.



1. Could you tell Jeff that Tony is having a party on Friday night?

2. Can you ask Jeff to do me a favor and pick up a pizza on his way home?

3. Could you ask Jeff what he would like me to get him for his birthday?

4. Could you tell Jeff that there will be a staff meeting on Friday at 10:00?

5. Jeff is picking me up after basketball practice. Can you tell him not to be late?

6. Please tell Jeff that I owe him an apology – I forgot about our date last night.

7. Can you ask Jeff to return my call? I need to know when his report will be ready.

8. Could you ask Jeff whether he can come to class on Friday night instead of Thursday?

B Who do you think left each message? (More than one answer is possible.)

his boss his girlfriend his mother his Spanish teacher his younger sister

Indirect requests ▶

Statements

Jeff, Tony is having a party.

Imperatives

Jeff, don't be late.

Yes/No questions

Sofia, are you free on Friday?

Sofia, do you have my number?

Wh-questions

Jeff, when does the party start?

Sofia, what time should I pick you up?

Indirect requests introduced by that

→ Could you tell Jeff **(that) Tony is having a party?**

Indirect requests using infinitives

→ Can you tell Jeff **not to be late?**

Indirect requests introduced by if or whether

→ Can you ask Sofia **if she's free on Friday?**

→ Could you ask her **whether or not she has my number?**

Indirect requests introduced by a question word

→ Can you ask Jeff **when the party starts?**

→ Could you ask Sofia **what time I should pick her up?**

Rewrite these sentences as indirect requests. In other words, ask someone to deliver the message for you. Then compare with a partner.

1. Nina, can you do us a favor and drive us to the party?
2. Tony, how many friends can I bring to your party?
3. Sofia, are you going to the party with Jeff?
4. Kevin, did you accept the invitation to Tony's party?
5. Mario, are you going to give Tony a gift?
6. Anne-Marie, please return my phone call.
7. Dan, you owe me an apology for calling me after midnight!
8. Kimberly, I have to turn down your invitation to the movies.

1. *Could you ask Nina if she can do us a favor and drive us to the party?*

SPEAKING *Pass it on.*

A Write five unusual requests for your partner to pass on to classmates.

Would you ask Jin Sook if she could lend me \$100?

B Class activity Ask your partner to pass on your requests. Go around the class and make your partner's requests. Then tell your partner how people responded.

- A: Would you ask Jin Sook if she could lend me \$100?
 B: Sure. . . . Jin Sook, could you lend Isam \$100?
 C: I'm sorry, but I can't! Could you tell Isam I'm broke?
 B: Isam, Jin Sook says that she's broke.



Yes or No?

Scan the article. Where did the three events occur?

- 1 Living in a foreign culture can be exciting, but it can also be confusing. A group of Americans who taught English in other countries recently discussed their experiences. They decided that miscommunications were always possible, even over something as simple as “yes” and “no.”
- 2 On her first day in Micronesia, Lisa thought people were ignoring her requests. The day was hot, and she needed a cold drink. She went into a store and asked, “Do you have cold drinks?” The woman there didn’t say anything. Lisa rephrased the question. Still the woman said nothing. Lisa gave up and left the store. She later learned that the woman had answered her: She had raised her eyebrows, which in Micronesia means “yes.”
- 3 This reminded Jan of an experience she had in Bulgaria. She had gone to a restaurant that was known for its stuffed cabbage. She asked the waiter, “Do you have stuffed cabbage today?” He nodded his head. Jan eagerly waited, but the cabbage never came. In that country, a nod means “no.”
- 4 Tom had a similar problem when he arrived in India. After explaining something in class, he asked his students if they understood. They responded with many different nods and shakes of the head.



He assumed some people had not understood, so he explained again. When he asked again if they understood, they did the same thing. He soon found out that his students did understand. In India, people nod and shake their heads in different ways depending on where they come from. You have to know where a person is from to understand if they are indicating “yes” or “no.”

A Read the article. Then answer the questions.

1. What were these Americans doing in other countries?
2. What was Lisa trying to buy?
3. How do people show “yes” in Micronesia?
4. Who was Jan talking to?
5. What does a head nod mean in Bulgaria?
6. Why did Tom misunderstand his class?

B What do these words refer to? Write the correct word(s).

1. it (par. 1, line 2)
2. their (par. 1, line 4)
3. her (par. 2, line 8)
4. that country (par. 3, line 6)
5. the same thing (par. 4, line 7)

C Group work Have you ever had a similar communication problem? What happened?