


# 16

## What's your excuse?

### 1 SNAPSHOT

EXCUSES, EXCUSES	
Situation	Excuse
Being late for an appointment	"My watch stopped." "The traffic was terrible!"
Forgetting an appointment	"I wrote the wrong date on my calendar." "I forgot to check my calendar."
Not doing homework	"My sister was using the computer." "I thought it was due tomorrow."
Getting home late	"I couldn't get a ride." "I missed the bus."
Not accepting a date	"I'm not allowed to date." "I have a boyfriend/girlfriend."



**Talk about these questions.**

*Have you ever heard any of these excuses? Do you ever use any of them?*

*What other excuses might you give in these situations?*

*Do you think that you should always tell the truth?*

### 2 CONVERSATION

**E3** Listen and practice.

Daniel: Hi, Amanda.

Amanda: Oh, Daniel! I was going to call you tonight.

Daniel: What's up?

Amanda: Well, it's Albert's birthday on Saturday, and I'm planning a surprise party for him.

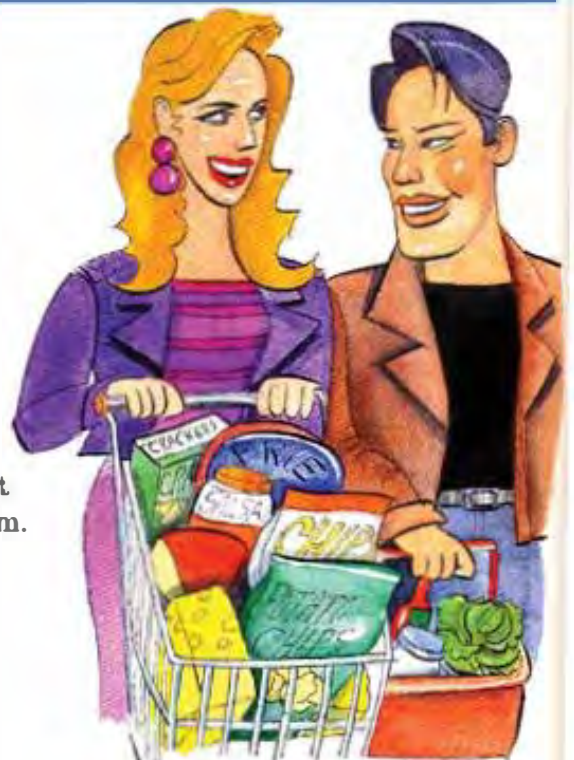
Daniel: Sounds like fun.

Amanda: The idea is this: I've asked Albert to go to a movie with me at six. After the movie, we go back to his apartment to have dinner. So be at Albert's by 7:30 to wait for us and surprise him. His roommate will let you in.

Daniel: OK. Great.

Amanda: Uh, can you bring some soda? Oh, and don't say anything to Albert.

Daniel: No problem.



### 3 GRAMMAR FOCUS

#### Reported speech: requests

Notice how requests are reported with the verbs *ask*, *tell*, and *say* + the infinitive.

##### Original request

Can you bring some soda?

Don't say anything to Albert.

##### Reported request

She **asked me to bring** some soda.

She **told me to bring** some soda.

She **said to bring** some soda.

She **asked me not to say** anything to Albert.

She **told me not to say** anything to Albert.

She **said not to say** anything to Albert.

Here are some things Amanda told the surprise-party guests. Write down her requests using *ask*, *tell*, or *say*. Then compare with a partner.

1. Meet at Albert's apartment at 7:30 on Saturday.
2. Can you bring your favorite CDs?
3. Don't bring any food.
4. Can you bring a small gift for Albert?
5. Don't spend more than \$10 on the gift.
6. Be careful not to say anything about the party to him.

Amanda told them to meet  
at Albert's apartment at  
7:30 on Saturday.

### 4 PICNIC AT THE PARK

**A** Imagine you're planning a picnic (or party). Write three positive and three negative requests for your guests.

Meet me at the park at 2 o'clock.

Bring a baseball bat.

Don't forget your bathing suit.

**B Pair work** Take turns reading your requests. Confirm the information using reported requests.

A: You said to meet you at the park at 2 o'clock.

B: That's right.

A: You asked me to bring a baseball.

B: No, I asked you to bring a baseball bat.

A: Oh, that's right. And you told me . . .

**C Group work** Join another pair and report what your partner told you.

"Charles is planning a picnic. He asked me to meet him at the park at 2 o'clock. . ."





## 5 WORD POWER Collocation

**A** Find three words or phrases in the list that are usually paired with each verb.

anger	a compliment	a criticism	a joke	your regrets
an apology	a concern	an excuse	a lie	sympathy
a complaint	your congratulations	an invitation	a reason	the truth

express	.....	.....	.....
give	.....	.....	.....
make	.....	.....	.....
offer	.....	.....	.....
tell	.....	.....	.....

**B Pair work** In what situations would you do the things in part A? Write five questions using the information in the chart. Then take turns asking and answering the questions.

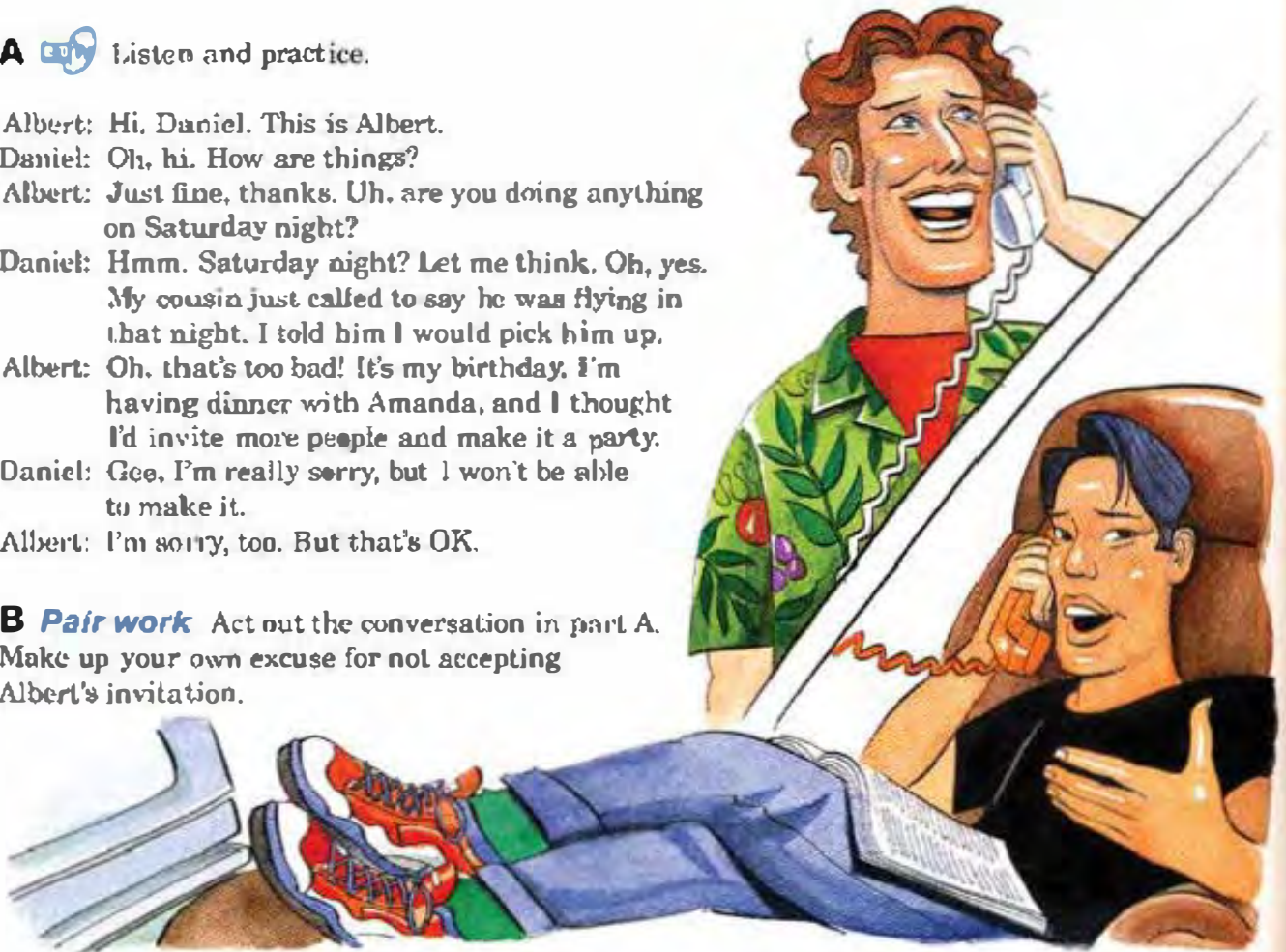
A: When would you tell a lie?  
 B: Maybe if someone asked me how old I am.

## 6 CONVERSATION

**A**  Listen and practice.

Albert: Hi, Daniel. This is Albert.  
 Daniel: Oh, hi. How are things?  
 Albert: Just fine, thanks. Uh, are you doing anything on Saturday night?  
 Daniel: Hmm. Saturday night? Let me think. Oh, yes. My cousin just called to say he was flying in that night. I told him I would pick him up.  
 Albert: Oh, that's too bad! It's my birthday. I'm having dinner with Amanda, and I thought I'd invite more people and make it a party.  
 Daniel: Gee, I'm really sorry, but I won't be able to make it.  
 Albert: I'm sorry, too. But that's OK.

**B Pair work** Act out the conversation in part A. Make up your own excuse for not accepting Albert's invitation.



# 7 LISTENING

**A** Listen to Albert inviting friends to his party on Saturday. What excuses do people give for not coming? Match the person to the excuse.

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. Scott .....  | a. She said that she wasn't feeling well.            |
| 2. Fumiko ..... | b. He said he was taking his mother to a dance club. |
| 3. Manuel ..... | c. She said she had houseguests for the weekend.     |
| 4. Regina ..... | d. He said that he would be out of town.             |
|                 | e. She said she might go out with a friend.          |
|                 | f. He said he was going away with his family.        |



**B** Listen. It's the night of Albert's birthday party. What happens?

# 8 GRAMMAR FOCUS

## Reported speech

*If the reporting verb is in the past, the statement reported is usually changed to a form of the past.*

### Direct statements

- I'm not feeling well.
- There is an office party.
- I visit my mother every Saturday.
- I made a date with Jim.
- I have planned a trip.

### Reported statements

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| She said (that)   | she wasn't feeling well.               |
|                   | there was an office party.             |
|                   | she visited her mother every Saturday. |
|                   | she had made a date with Jim.          |
|                   | she had planned a trip.                |
| He told me (that) | he couldn't come.                      |
|                   | he would be out of town.               |
|                   | he might go out with a friend.         |

Cindy is having a party. Look at these excuses. Change them into reported speech. Then compare with a partner.

- Cindy: "There is a party on Saturday at my house."


*Cindy said there was a party on Saturday at her house.*

- Bob: "I'm leaving town for the weekend."
- Mary: "I've been invited to a wedding on Saturday."
- Jim: "I promised to help Joanne move."
- Ann: "I can't come because I have the flu."
- John: "I'll be studying for a test all weekend."
- Susan: "I have to meet someone at the airport."
- David: "I may have to work that night."





## 9 PRONUNCIATION *Had, would, and was*

**A**  Listen to how **had**, **would**, and **was** are pronounced in these sentences.

She said she **had** forgotten the appointment.  
 He said he **would** be out of town.  
 She said she **was** busy.

**B** Practice the sentences you wrote in Exercise 8 again. Pay attention to the pronunciation of **had**, **would**, and **was**.

## 10 NEVER ON SUNDAY!

**A** Your teacher wants to have an extra class on Sunday afternoon. You don't want to go. Make up an excuse.

*I'm taking my dog to the hairdresser.*

**B Class activity** Talk to at least five classmates. What excuses do they give?

A: Are you coming to the class on Sunday?  
 B: No. I have an appointment with my psychic.


**C** Tell the class the best excuse you heard.

"Jack said he was taking his grandmother to a wrestling match."  
 "Sue said that she had a belly-dancing lesson."



## 11 LISTENING AND WRITING

CLASS AUDIO ONLY

 Nancy is out of town for the weekend. Listen to four messages on her answering machine. Her roommate has written down the first one. Write down the other messages.



Nancy - Friday, 9 P.M.  
 Bill called. He said he would meet you in front of Pizza House at 6:30 P.M. on Monday.

interchange 16

### Excuses, excuses

Make plans with your partner. Student A turns to page IC-19. Student B turns to page IC-21.

**12 READING**

# The Truth About Lying

Do you ever tell little lies? If yes, when and why?

It seems that everybody tells lies – well, not big lies, but what we call “white lies.” Telling white lies isn’t really that bad. Most of the time, people do it because they want to protect a friendship. Some studies suggest that the average person lies about seven times a day. The only real questions are about when we lie and who we tell lies to. A recent study found that people frequently stretch the truth. Here are some ways they do it.

**#1 Lying to hide something:**

People often lie because they want to hide something from someone. For example, a son doesn’t tell his parents that he’s dating a girl because he doesn’t think they will like her. Instead, he says he’s going out with the guys.

**#2 Giving false excuses:**

Sometimes people lie because they don’t want to do something. For example, someone invites you to a party. You think it will be boring, so you say you’re busy.

**#3 Lying to make someone feel good:**

Often we stretch the truth to make someone feel good. For example, your friend cooks dinner for you, but it tastes terrible. Do you say so? No! You probably say, “Mmm, this is delicious!”

**#4 Lying to hide bad news:**

Sometimes we don’t want to tell someone bad news. For example, you have just had a very bad day at work, but you don’t feel like talking about it. So if someone asks you about your day, you just say everything was fine.



**A** Read the article. Then look at these situations. Are they examples of 1, 2, 3, or 4? (More than one answer is possible.)

1. You borrowed a friend’s motorcycle and scratched it. You’re having it painted. When your friend wants the motorcycle back, you say the engine didn’t sound right and you’re having it checked.
2. Your friend gives you an ugly vase for your birthday. You say, “Oh, it’s beautiful!”
3. You lost your job and are having trouble finding a new one. An old friend calls to find out how you are. You tell your friend you’re busy writing a book.
4. Someone you don’t like invites you to a movie, so you say, “I’ve already seen it.”
5. You’re planning a surprise party for a friend. To get her to come over at the right time, you ask her to stop by to see your new VCR.

.....

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**B Pair work** Talk about these questions.

1. Do you know of any other reasons people tell white lies?
2. When is it better to tell the truth rather than lie?
3. Do you ever give excuses that are not really true? When and why?



# Review of Units 13–16

## 1 I SHOULDN'T HAVE . . .

**A** Look at the five situations below and think about the past month. Then write down an example for each situation.

1. something you shouldn't have bought
2. someone you should have e-mailed or written to
3. someone you should have called
4. something you shouldn't have said
5. something you should have done

**B Pair work** Talk about each situation in part A.

A: I bought a lamp at a garage sale. I shouldn't have bought it because I really don't like it.

B: I did something similar recently. I shouldn't have bought . . .



## 2 LISTENING

CLASS AUDIO ONLY

**A** Listen to some people talking. What are they talking about? Write down each topic below.

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....

CLASS AUDIO ONLY

**B** Listen again. What does each person mean? Check (✓) the best response.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> She is confused. | 3. <input type="checkbox"/> He couldn't understand it.       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> She is afraid.      | <input type="checkbox"/> He thought it was very interesting. |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> She enjoyed it.  | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> She thought it was all right.    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> She hated it.       | <input type="checkbox"/> She thought it was terrible.        |

## 3 RULES AND REGULATIONS

**A Group work** How many rules can you think of for each of these places?

on an airplane

in an art museum

at a zoo

in a library

in a movie theater

in school

"On an airplane, you have to wear your seat belt when the plane is taking off and landing."

**B Class activity** Share your group's ideas.

### useful expressions

You can/can't . . . .

You are/aren't allowed to . . . .

You have to . . . .

## 4 WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

**Group work** Take turns asking and answering these questions.

Have you seen any frightening movies lately?

Tell the group about it.

What is the most amusing show on TV these days?

What is it about?

What is the most shocking news story you've read in the past year? Give some details.

Has a friend told you an amazing story recently?

What was it about?

What is the most boring time you've had recently?

Why were you so bored?

"I saw a movie about a person who . . ."

"I find . . . amusing. It's about a family that . . ."

"I was shocked by a story in the news last month. It was about . . ."



## 5 THAT SOUNDS FANTASTIC!

**A** What would you do in these situations? Complete the chart.

If I had \$1,000 to spend, .....

If I could invite anyone I wanted to dinner, .....

If I could take a vacation anywhere in the world, .....

If I could change one thing in the world, .....

If I could be a famous movie star, .....

**B Group work** Take turns comparing your answers.

## 6 GOOD INTENTIONS

**A Group work** What are some things you would like to do in the near future? Think of three good intentions.

A: I'm going to try to learn how to sail.

B: That's interesting. Are you going to take lessons?

C: . . .

**B Class activity** Report the best intentions you heard.

"Bob said he was going to try to learn how to sail!"

"Terry told me that she wanted to spend more time studying."





interchange 16 **EXCUSES, EXCUSES****Student A**

**A Role play** You and your partner want to get together one evening in July. However, you are very busy and you also want to keep time open for other friends. You don't want to hurt your partner's feelings, so you make up excuses for many of the days in that month. Look at your calendar of evening plans. Then ask and answer questions to find out when you are both free. (Write your partner's excuses on the calendar.) Don't give up until you make a date.

A: Do you want to go out on the second?

B: I'm sorry. I'm going to my friend's wedding. Are you free on the first?

A: Well, I . . .

<b>July</b>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 <i>dinner with Lynn</i>	2
3	4 <i>class</i>	5	6 ←→ You want to keep these dates free. Make up excuses!	7	8 <i>movie with Tom</i>	9
10	11 ←→ You hope a friend calls. Make up excuses!	12	13 <i>jazz club with Mike</i>	14 <i>theater with Jane</i>	15	16
17 <i>dinner with office friends</i>	18 <i>class</i>	19	20 <i>study for exam tomorrow</i>	21 ←→ You know your old friend will probably be in town! Make up excuses!	22	23
24 31	25	26 ←→ You want to keep these dates free. Make up excuses!	27	28 <i>dinner for Dad's birthday</i>	29 <i>go dancing with Ted &amp; Sarah</i>	30 You might have a date with an old school friend. Make up an excuse.

**B Pair work** Now work with another "Student A." Discuss the excuses "Student B" gave you. Decide which excuses were probably true and which ones were probably not true.

"Anna said that on the ninth she had to stay home and reorganize her clothes closet. That was probably not true."

## interchange 16

## EXCUSES, EXCUSES

## Student B

**A Role play** You and your partner want to get together one evening in July. However, you are very busy and you also want to keep time open for other friends. You don't want to hurt your partner's feelings, so you make up excuses for many of the days in that month. Look at your calendar of evening plans. Then ask and answer questions to find out when you are both free. (Write your partner's excuses on the calendar.) Don't give up until you make a date.

A: Do you want to go out on the second?

B: I'm sorry. I'm going to my friend's wedding. Are you free on the first?

A: Well, I . . . .

JULY						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 <i>Sue's wedding</i>
3 <i>You want to keep these dates free. Make up excuses!</i>	4 <i>You want to keep these dates free. Make up excuses!</i>	5 <i>movie with Bob</i>	6	7 <i>You don't want to make plans in case you want to get away for a few days. Make up excuses!</i>	8 <i>You don't want to make plans in case you want to get away for a few days. Make up excuses!</i>	9 <i>You don't want to make plans in case you want to get away for a few days. Make up excuses!</i>
10 <i>visit Mom and Dad</i>	11 <i>office party</i>	12	13 <i>photography workshop at school</i>	14	15 <i>Maybe an old friend will call. Make up excuses!</i>	16 <i>Maybe an old friend will call. Make up excuses!</i>
17 <i>visit Grandma</i>	18	19 <i>museum with Joe</i>	20	21	22 <i>party at Amy's</i>	23 <i>baseball game with Jim</i>
24 <i>family get-together</i>	25 <i>You need a break. Make up an excuse!</i>	26 <i>book group meeting</i>	27	28 <i>need to work late tonight</i>	29	30
31						

**B Pair work** Now work with another "Student B." Discuss the excuses "Student A" gave you. Decide which excuses were probably true and which ones were probably not true.

"Joe said that on the sixth he had to stay home and reorganize his clothes closet. That was probably *not true*."