

# 13 Talking

## A Say (say/said/said)

We use **say** when we report someone's words.  
She **said** 'This is horrible!'  
He **said that** he wanted a drink.

We use **say** when we ask about language.

A: **How do you say** 'book' in Spanish?

B: 'Libro'.

We **say hello / goodbye / please / thank you / Happy Birthday / Merry Christmas / Happy New Year / Congratulations**

## B Tell (tell/told/told)

**Tell** is usually followed immediately by a person. **Say** is not followed immediately by a person.

He **told me** his name. [NOT He ~~said me~~ his name.]

We use **tell** when we want to know how to get to a place.

Can you **tell me** where the bus station is, please? [NOT Can you ~~say me~~ ...?]

We use **tell** with other **wh-words** too (**when, how, why, where**), e.g. you can **tell someone how** to do something, **where** something is, **why** something happened.

He **told me how** to send a fax. **Tell me when** you want to have dinner.

You can **tell someone the time / a story / a joke / your name / address / telephone number.**

## C Ask

**Ask** is used for questions.

My sister **asked me** where I was going. (or My sister asked (me) 'Where are you going?')

A: Can I **ask you a question**?

B: Yes.

A: What day of the week were you born?

B: Thursday.

You can **ask someone the way / the time / a question.**

**Ask somebody to do something** and **ask someone for something.**

I **asked him** to turn off his radio. (or I said 'Please turn off your radio.')

She **asked for** the bill. (or She said 'Can I have the bill please?')



## D Speak/talk/answer/reply

Do you **speak** Japanese? [NOT Do you ~~talk~~ Japanese?]

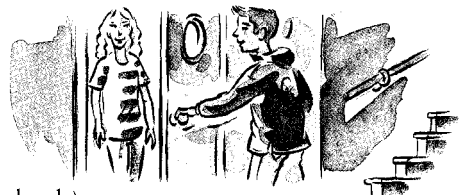
I like **talking to** you. (having a conversation with you)

Can you **answer** the telephone / the door, please?

(pick up the phone / open the door to see who it is)

I wrote a letter to him but he did not **reply**.

(for letters/faxes/e-mails) (he did not send me a letter back).



# Exercises

**13.1** Fill the gaps with the correct form of *say* or *tell*.

- 1 Can you *tell* me where the Plaza Hotel is, please?
- 2 She me her name.
- 3 I goodbye to her.
- 4 'Please, me a story,' the little boy
- 5 'Come here!' the police officer
- 6 The teacher that the students were very good.

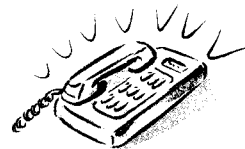
**13.2** What do you say?



- 1 You want to know where the railway station is.  
Can .....?
- 2 You want to know the word for 'tree' in German.  
How .....?
- 3 You want to know the time.  
Excuse me, can you .....?



- 4 Your course is finished. You want to say goodbye to your teacher.  
I just want to .....
- 5 You want to know when the exam is.  
Can you .....
- 6 The telephone rings. You are in the bathroom.  
(To your friend)  
Can you .....



**13.3** Match the verbs on the left with the words on the right. Draw lines.

- |            |                       |
|------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Say      | a a letter            |
| 2 Answer   | b someone to help you |
| 3 Ask for  | c Happy New Year      |
| 4 Reply to | d the door            |
| 5 Tell     | e a friend            |
| 6 Talk to  | f someone a joke      |
| 7 Ask      | g the bill            |

**13.4** On the left are some things in different languages. Can you match them with the sentences on the right? Draw lines.

- |                         |                                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 La cuenta, por favor. | a Say Merry Christmas in Swedish.     |
| 2 Berapa ini?           | b Say thank you in Arabic.            |
| 3 God jul!              | c Ask for the bill in Spanish.        |
| 4 Kon'nichi wa.         | d Ask how much something is in Malay. |
| 5 Shukran.              | e Say good morning in Japanese.       |