


# 16 What's your excuse?

## 1 SNAPSHOT

### EXCUSES, EXCUSES

Situation	Excuse
Being late	My watch stopped. My class got out late.
Forgetting to meet someone	I wrote down the wrong date. 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.



"I'm sorry I'm late. My watch stopped."

Have you ever heard any of these excuses? Have you ever used any of them?  
Which are good excuses? Which are bad excuses?  
What other excuses can you make for not accepting an invitation?

## 2 PERSPECTIVES Who said it?

**A** Who do you think made these requests? Listen and match each request with a person.

1. He asked me to play my music more quietly. ....
2. She told me not to come home after midnight. ....
3. She said to drink at least six glasses of water a day. ....
4. He said not to be late for practice again. ....
5. She asked me to pick up the kids after school. ....
6. He told me to bring a dictionary tomorrow. ....
7. He asked me not to tell anyone about his new girlfriend. ....

- a. my doctor
- b. my coach
- c. my friend
- d. my neighbor
- e. my mother
- f. my wife
- g. my teacher

**B Pair work** Can you think of another request each person might make?

A: A doctor might also tell a patient to get more exercise.  
B: . . . or to avoid eating greasy foods.

### 3 GRAMMAR FOCUS

#### Reported speech: requests

##### Original request

Can you play your music more quietly?

Don't come home after midnight.

##### Reported request

He **asked me to play** my music more quietly.

She **told me not to come** home after midnight.

She **said not to come** home after midnight.

**A** Amanda is having a surprise party for Albert. Look at what she told the guests. Write each request using *ask*, *tell*, or *say*. Then compare with a partner.

1. Meet at Albert's apartment at 7:30.
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 to him.

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

**B Group work** Imagine you're planning a class party. Write four requests. Then take turns reading your requests and changing them into reported requests.

Juan: Bring something good to eat to the party!

Sonia: Juan told us to bring something good to eat.

Noriko: Can you help me clean up after the party?

Jin Sook: Noriko asked us to help her clean up.

### 4 SPEAKING What a request!

**A** Think of requests that people have made recently. Write two things people asked you to do and two things people asked you *not* to do.

Person	Request
my mom	get a haircut
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

**B Group work** Compare with others. Who has the most interesting or unusual requests? Who did what was asked?

A: My mom asked me to get a haircut.

B: What did you tell her?



## 5 WORD POWER Verb and noun pairs

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

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 do you do the things in part A? Write five sentences about things you *never*, *sometimes*, or *always* do. Then take turns reading your sentences and asking questions.

A: I never tell a lie.

B: Are you sure? What if someone asks how much you weigh?

## 6 CONVERSATION Are you doing anything on Saturday?

**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?

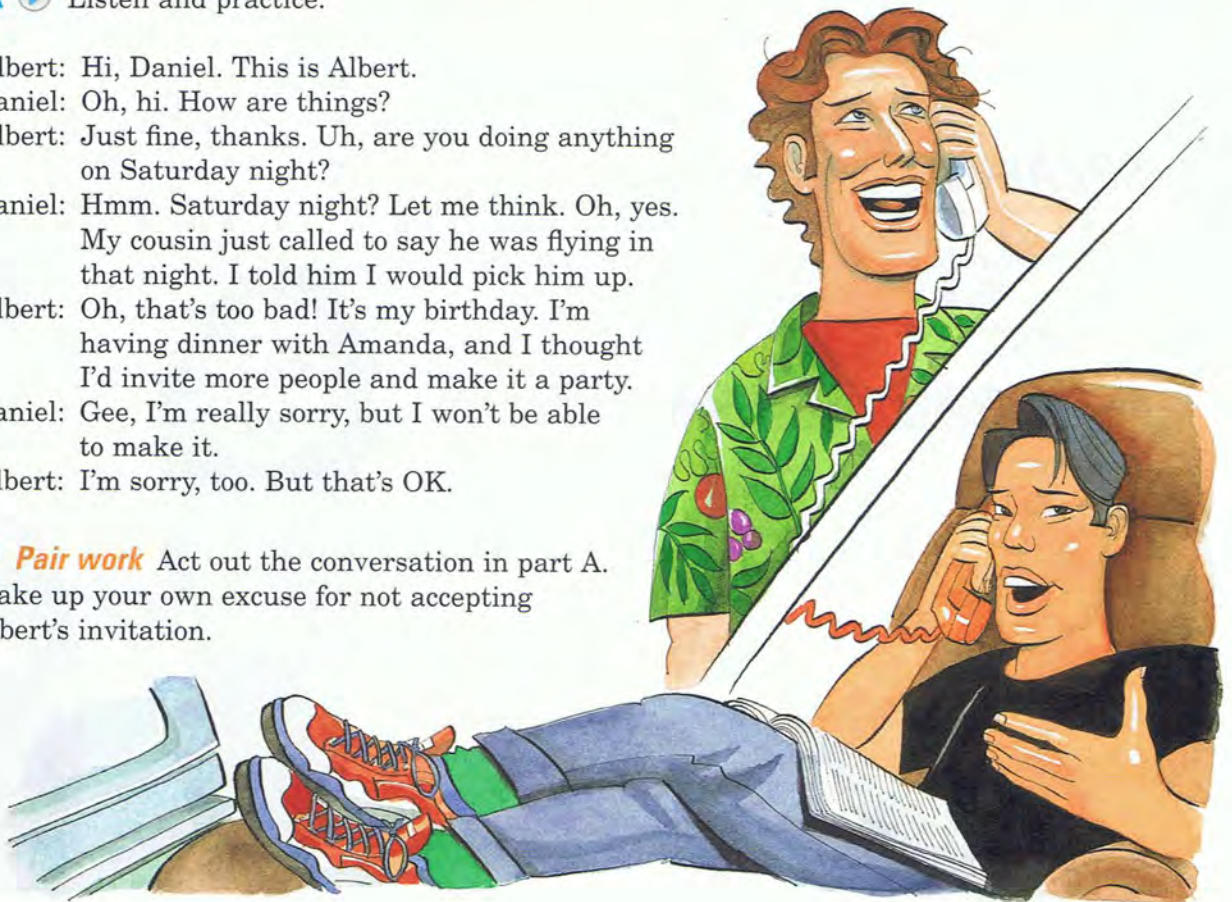
Daniel: Hmm. Saturday night? Let me think. Oh, yes. My cousin just called to say he was flying in that night. I told him I would pick him up.

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.

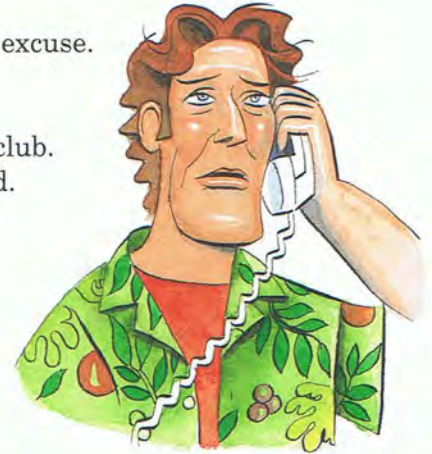
**B Pair work** Act out the conversation in part A. Make up your own excuse for not accepting Albert's invitation.



## 7 LISTENING *He said, she said*

**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 friends.           |
|                 | f. He said he was going away with his family.        |



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

## 8 GRAMMAR FOCUS

### Reported speech: statements

#### Direct statement

I'm **not feeling** well.  
 I **have** houseguests for the weekend.  
 I **made** a tennis date with Kim.  
 I **have planned** an exciting trip.  
 We **can't come** tomorrow.  
 We **will be** out of town.  
 We **may go** out with friends.

#### Reported statement

She **said** (that) she **wasn't feeling** well.  
 she **had** houseguests for the weekend.  
 she **had made** a tennis date with Kim.  
 she **had planned** an exciting trip.  
 They **told me** (that) they **couldn't come** tomorrow.  
 they **would be** out of town.  
 they **might go** out with friends.

**A** Sandra is having a party at her house on Saturday. Look at these excuses. Change them into reported speech. Then compare with a partner.

- Donna: "I have to baby-sit my nephew that night."
- William and Brigitte: "We're going out of town for the weekend."
- Mary: "I've been invited to a wedding on Saturday."
- James: "I promised to help Dennis move."
- Anita: "I can't come because I have the flu."
- Mark: "I'll be studying for a test all weekend."
- Eva and Randall: "We have to pick someone up at the airport that evening."
- David: "I may have to work late on Saturday night."

*Donna said she had to baby-sit her nephew that night.*

*Donna told her she had to baby-sit her nephew that night.*

**B Group work** Imagine you don't want to go to Sandra's party. Take turns making excuses and changing them into reported speech.

A: I'm sorry I can't go. I have tickets to a concert that night.

B: Lucky guy! He said he had tickets to a concert that night.

## 9 PRONUNCIATION *Reduction of had and would*

**A** Listen and practice. Notice how **had** and **would** are reduced in the following sentences.

She said she'd made the bed. (She said she **had made** the bed.)

She said she'd make the bed. (She said she **would make** the bed.)

**B** Listen to four sentences. Check (✓) if you hear the reduced form of **had** or **would**.

1.  had      2.  had      3.  had      4.  had  
 would       would       would       would

## 10 SPEAKING *Good intentions*

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

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

B: That sounds fun. Are you going to take lessons?

**B Class activity** Report the best intentions you heard. Then predict which ones will happen.

"Tatyana said she was going to learn how to sail, but she doesn't want to take lessons."



## 11 WRITING *A voice mail message*

**A** Dan is out of town for the weekend. Listen to four voice mails he received. His roommate has written down the first message. Write down the three other messages.

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

Blank notepad for writing a voice mail message.

Blank notepad for writing a voice mail message.

Blank notepad for writing a voice mail message.

**B Pair work** Compare your messages. Is any important information missing?

## 12 INTERCHANGE 16 *Excuses, excuses*

Make some plans. Student A find Interchange 16A; Student B find Interchange 16B.

# The Truth About

# Lying

*Is it ever better to tell a lie rather than the truth? If so, when?*

Most of us are taught to believe that lying is wrong. But it seems that everybody tells lies – not big lies, but what we call “white lies.” If we believe that lying is wrong, why do we do it? Most of the time, people have very good reasons for lying. For example, they might want to protect a friendship or someone’s feelings. So, when do we lie and who do we lie to? A recent study found that the average person lies about seven times a day. Here are some ways and reasons why.

**#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 Lying to make an excuse:** 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 avoid sharing 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 that everything was fine.

**A** Read the article. Then complete the summary with information from the article.

It isn’t necessarily ..... to lie. It’s probably OK to lie if you want to protect ..... or ..... . The main reasons for lying are to ..... , to ..... , to ..... , or to .....

**B** Look at these situations. For each example, write the number of the appropriate reason.

- ..... 1. Your friend gives you an ugly shirt for your birthday. You say, “Oh, it’s great!”
- ..... 2. You lost your job and are having trouble finding a new one. When an old friend calls to find out how you are, you say you’re doing well.
- ..... 3. Someone you don’t like invites you to a movie, so you say, “I’ve already seen it.”
- ..... 4. You’re planning a surprise party for a friend. To get him to come over at the right time, you ask him to stop by to see your new motorcycle.

**C Group work** Can you think of other reasons people tell white lies? What white lies have you told recently?