

Tenses in telephoning phrases review

Gapfill

Fill each gap below with the right form of the verb and subject in brackets (). Usually only one tense is possible in each. Note that some such as questions need auxiliary verbs.

1. Anyway, _____
(I phone) in order to make an appointment for next week.
2. So, the reason that _____ (I call) is...
3. Anyway, _____ (you see) my email about...?
4. Hi Jane. _____ (you have) a good weekend?
5. Good morning. My name is Alex Case. _____ = _____ (I call) from ABC Limited.
6. Hello Steve. _____ (I ring) about the agenda of the meeting.
7. Hi John. _____ (I return) your call.
8. Hi. _____ (I phone) in connection with our meeting next week.
9. Hi. _____ (someone phone) me from this number.
10. Sorry, _____ (you say) 15 or 50?
11. If you can hold on for just a second, _____ (I get) a pen and some paper.
12. Okay, _____ (I check) with my boss and phone you back as soon as I can.
13. I'm afraid _____
(he have) lunch at the moment, but he'll probably be back soon.
14. Of course. Can I ask _____ (who call)?
15. I'm afraid it's too difficult to explain on the phone. _____
(I email) you a link, if that's okay.
16. _____ (I just check) if she is available. Please hold the line.
17. I'm afraid _____ (my next client just arrive).
18. Well, _____
(it be) nice talking to you but I have a meeting in a few minutes, so...
19. No problem. Can you phone me back when _____ (the meeting finish)?
20. No problem. _____ (she have) your number?
21. No, that's okay, thanks. _____ (I just call) again later.
22. Okay, _____ (I not keep) you any longer then. Speak to you soon.
23. Okay. _____ (I make sure) she gets your message.
24. Okay. _____ (I tell) him that you called.
25. Sorry. How _____ (you spell) your family name?
26. _____ (I need) any punctuation in that?
27. I'm sorry, _____
(she meet) a client at the moment, but she'll be finished by four.
28. Who _____ (I speak) to, please?
29. Sorry, _____ (I not catch) your name.
30. Good, thanks. How about you? How _____ (your trip be)?
31. Anyway, _____ (you have) time to talk?
32. Just a moment while _____ (I get) some paper.

Hint 1: Each pair of phrases should be in the same tense, so number 1 and number 2 have the same tense as each other, number 3 and number 4 have the same tense, etc.

Hint 2: The missing tenses are Present Simple, Present Continuous ("am/ is/ are + v+ing"), will, Past Simple ("...ed", etc), and Present Perfect ("has/ have + PP"), not necessarily in that order.

Suggested answers

Other tenses are possible, so check if you wrote something different.

1. Anyway, I'm phoning in order to make an appointment for next week.
2. So, the reason that I'm calling is...
3. Anyway, did you see my email about...?
4. Hi Jane. Did you have a good weekend?
5. Good morning. My name is Alex Case. I'm calling from ABC Limited.
6. Hello Steve. I'm ringing about the agenda of the meeting.
7. Hi John. I'm returning your call.
8. Hi. I'm phoning in connection with our meeting next week.
9. Hi. Someone phoned me from this number.
10. Sorry, did you say 15 or 50?
11. If you can hold on for just a second, I'll get a pen and some paper.
12. Okay, I'll check with my boss and phone you back as soon as I can.
13. I'm afraid he's having lunch at the moment, but he'll probably be back soon.
14. Of course. Can I ask who is calling?
15. I'm afraid it's too difficult to explain on the phone. I'll email you a link, if that's okay.
16. I'll just check if she is available. Please hold the line.
17. I'm afraid my next client has just arrived.
18. Well, it's been nice talking to you but I have a meeting in a few minutes, so...
19. No problem. Can you phone me back when the meeting finishes?
20. No problem. Does she have your number?
21. No, that's okay, thanks. I'll just call again later.
22. Okay, I won't keep you any longer then. Speak to you soon.
23. Okay. I'll make sure she gets your message.
24. Okay. I'll tell him that you called.
25. Sorry. How do you spell your family name?
26. Do I need any punctuation in that?
27. I'm sorry, she is meeting a client at the moment, but she'll be finished by four.
28. Who am I speaking to, please?
29. Sorry, I didn't catch your name.
30. Good, thanks. How about you? How was your trip?
31. Anyway, do you have time to talk?
32. Just a moment while I get some paper.

Test each other in pairs:

- Read out gapped out sentences from the first page for your partner to complete. If they are wrong, read out another one with the same missing tense. They can only guess once per hint.
- Read out just the part that goes in the gap and help your partner make a whole telephoning phrase out of it. Other phrases not above might also be correct, but make sure that the tense is used in the right way.
- Say a line that needs a response and see if your partner can respond appropriately.
- Say a line that needs a response, listen to your partner's reply, then together roleplay the rest of that phone call, up to saying goodbye at the end.

Using verbs in telephoning

Without looking above, work together to make at least one correct telephoning sentence from each verb and subject below, without changing the tense. Your teacher will tell if you should do it orally and/ or if you should write the sentences. Many sentences not above are also possible.

I'm phoning
I'm calling
did you see
did you have
I'm ringing
I'm returning
someone phoned
did you say
I'll get
I'll check
he's having
who is calling
I'll email
I'll just check
my next client has just arrived
it's been
the meeting finishes
does she have
I'll just call
I won't keep
I'll make sure
I'll tell
do you spell
do I need
she's meeting
am I speaking
I didn't catch
was your trip
do you have
I get

Compare your answers with the previous page. Many other sentence are possible, so please check if you said and/ or wrote something different.

Speaking practice of tenses in telephoning

Use and tick off the subjects and verbs above on an uncompleted copy of this worksheet as you roleplay phone calls.