

Telephone English – some basic vocabulary

Here is a list of expressions which are commonly used during the various moments of a call (provided by Claude, 6 July 2026):

Answering the phone

- Hello, this is [Name] speaking.
- [Company name], how can I help you?
- Good morning/afternoon, [Company name].

Asking who's calling

- Who's calling, please?
- Could I ask who's calling?
- May I ask what this is regarding?

Asking to speak to someone

- Could I speak to Mr./Ms. [Name], please?
- Is Mr./Ms. [Name] available?
- I'd like to speak to someone in the sales department.

Connecting/transferring a call

- I'll put you through.
- Please hold the line.
- One moment, please.
- I'm transferring your call now.
- I'll connect you to his extension.

When someone is unavailable

- I'm afraid he's not available right now.
- She's in a meeting at the moment.
- He's on another line.
- She's out of the office today.
- Can I take a message?
- Would you like to leave a message?
- Can I ask him to call you back?

Taking/leaving a message

- Could you tell her that [Name] called?
- Could you ask him to call me back?
- Let me just take down your number.
- I'll make sure she gets the message.

Asking for/giving information

- Could you spell that for me, please?
- Could you repeat that, please?
- Can you give me your number, please?
- Sorry, could you speak up a little?

Dealing with problems

- I'm sorry, you have the wrong number.
- I'm sorry, the line's very bad.
- We seem to have a bad connection.
- Could you say that again? I didn't catch it.
- I think we got cut off.
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Ending a call

- Thank you for calling.
- I'll get back to you as soon as possible.
- Thanks for your time. Goodbye.
- Talk to you soon.

1/ Watch the video by Animated English – Essentials of Business English – [A telephone call](#)

2/ Then watch this video on [leaving a message by AbegVel](#).

3/ Effective [telephone tips from Successfully Speaking](#). Tips on manner and etiquette.

Here are 20 typical telephone-English sentences (created with a Claude request, 6 July 2026). Fill the gap in each sentence. The answers are at the bottom of the page.

1. Could I speak to Mr. Johnson, _____ ?
2. I'm calling _____ the meeting tomorrow.
3. Could you _____ me back later, please?
4. I'm afraid she's not _____ at the moment.
5. Can I take a _____, please?
6. Who's _____, please?
7. I'll put you _____ to the sales department.
8. Sorry, could you _____ that, please?
9. I'm returning your _____ from this morning.
10. Would you like to _____ a message?
11. Hold the line, please. I'll _____ you through.
12. He's on _____ another call right now.
13. Could you _____ me your number, please?
14. I'll _____ sure he gets the message.
15. Sorry, I think you've got the _____ number.
16. Can you hear me _____ ? The line's bad.
17. I'll get back to you as _____ as possible.
18. Let me just _____ you on hold for a moment.
19. Thanks for _____ ing back so quickly.
20. Is this a good _____ to talk?

Answers: 1; please 2; about 3; call 4; available 5; message 6; calling 7; through 8; repeat 9; call 10; leave 11; put 12; --- *no answer* 13; give 14; make 15; wrong 16; okay/all right 17; soon 18; put 19; call 20; time