

# Saying 'No' Tactfully



If someone asks you to do something, you can say 'no' in a direct way or you can suggest doing something else.

# Saying 'No'

I'm not keen on...
I don't particularly like...
I can't <sup>1</sup>stand...
It's not my idea of...
I'd really rather not...

1. Followed by a noun (people who... / waiting)

# Stating a preference

I'd <sup>2</sup>prefer... I'd really much rather... I'd rather...

2. Followed by a noun (tea), or to + verb (to wait)



In order to practise the phrases used to say no, students should work in pairs. Each situation has the ideas for a dialogue where one student says 'no' to what the other is suggesting.

#### STUDENT A

#### Part 1

Read only your own part, listen to your partner's response and use the above phrases.

- Let's go out for dinner.
   You love going out to a hamburger bar, ordering everything, then eating in your car.
- Let's go for a drink.Your idea of an evening out is to go down to the pub and spend the evening drinking.
- 3. Would you like to come and meet my parents? You are very keen that your friend meets your parents. You think (s)he likes you very much.

#### Part 2

Now listen to your partner's suggestions, respond appropriately and use the above phrases.

- You hate classical music and think it is only for snobs. There is a rock concert on at the ice rink tomorrow.
- Your idea of a nice weekend is to do absolutely nothing. You would be prepared to go for a walk round town to look at shops.
- You need to leave the office early because you have another appointment. You are in a hurry to finish off as early as possible.



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In order to practise the phrases used to say no, students should work in pairs. Each situation has the ideas for a dialogue where one student says 'no' to what the other is suggesting. Read only your own part, and use the phrases from the list.

#### STUDENT B

#### Part 1

Read only your own part, listen to your partner's response and use the above phrases.

1. Let's go to a concert.

You want to go to a Bach concert. It will last 4 hours.

- 2. Do you fancy going walking at the weekend? You like to set off at 6 on Saturday mornings for a whole day in the hills.
- 3. Shall we stop for a short break and finish off later?

You are tired and need some fresh air. You don't mind leaving the office later.

#### Part 2

Now listen to your partner's suggestions, respond appropriately and use the above phrases.

- Whenever you eat out, you like to go to one
  of the most expensive restaurants in town.
   You would never dream of going near a
  hamburger 'joint'.
- You are only 16 and know that if your parents knew you had been out drinking, they would be very angry.
- You know that A would like your friendship to become more serious, but you have your eye on someone else. In fact, you are hoping to go out with this other person tomorrow.

Adapted from: Conversation Gambits – Eric Keller, Sylvia T. Warner (LTP) ETI Malta www.etimalta.com





What's wrong here? Work with a partner and write a sentence saying why this is stupid.

## ON TESCO'S TIRIMISU DESSERT

Do not turn upside down. (Printed on the bottom of the box.)

## ON MARKS & SPENCER BREAD PUDDING

Product will be hot after heating.

# ON PACKAGING FOR A ROWENTA IRON

Do not iron clothes on body.

# ON BOOTS CHILDREN'S COUGH MEDICINE

Do not drive car or operate machinery.

### ON NYTOL (A SLEEPING AID)

Warning: may cause drowsiness.

## ON A KOREAN KITCHEN KNIFE

Warning: keep out of children.

# ON A STRING OF CHINESE MADE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

For indoor or outdoor use only.

# ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL MANUAL FOR A CANON CAMERA (circa 1966)

Do not rattle playfully at the shutter button.

# ON A JAPANESE FOOD PROCESSOR

Not to be used for the other use.

## ON SAINSBURY'S PEANUTS

Warning: contains nuts.

### ON AN AMERICAN AIRLINES PACKET OF NUTS

Instructions: open packet, eat nuts.

#### ON A BAR OF DIAL SOAP

Directions: Use like regular soap.

#### ON A FROZEN DINNER AT HOME

Serving suggestion: Defrost.





# ON A HOTEL-PROVIDED SHOWER CAP IN A BOX Fits one head.

## ON A PACKET OF SUN-MAID RAISINS

Why not try tossing over your favorite breakfast cereal?

### ON A HAIRDRYER

Do not use while sleeping.

#### **ON A BAG OF FRITOS**

You could be a winner! No purchase necessary. (Details inside).

## ON A SWEDISH CHAINSAW

Do not attempt to stop chain with your hands or genitals

## ON A CHILD'S SUPERMAN COSTUME

Wearing of this garment does not enable you to fly.

Taken from: http://www.laughbreak.com/lists/package\_instructions.html
And also found on: http://www.meridian.net.au/Humour/RealLife/sillyinstructions.html