

Good and bad travel English responses

Without looking below and without writing anything down, listen to your teacher read out some things that staff say and at least two different traveller's responses in each situation. Say which of the responses (A, B, C, etc) is not suitable in each case. There should be just one which is clearly wrong (because it's rude, could cause trouble, is against the rules, has the wrong function, etc). There are no basic grammar mistakes.

Cross off the one wrong response in each section below.

Check your answers as a class, making sure that you know why the other options are wrong.

Test each other in pairs or small groups:

- Do the same spotting the wrong answer activity as before
- Read out the prompt phrase and one option and see if your partner can spot if it is suitable or not
- Read out the prompt phrase and just one right option and see if your partner can think of one more suitable answer. Other phrases not below are also okay, as long as they are suitable.
- Read out the phrase and all the right options and see if your partner can think of at least one more suitable response
- Read out a phrase and the wrong option and see if your partner can say a better response
- Read out a phrase and see if your partner can reply in a correct way. Many other responses not below are also possible.
- Read out a prompt phrase and see how many correct responses your partner can come up with
- Read out a phrase and roleplay the rest of the conversation from that point.
- Roleplay complete conversations in the situations given below

Good and bad responses at an airport check-in desk

Good morning, Madam. Can I see your ticket and passport, please?

- A) Of course. Just a moment while I get them out of my bag. Where are they? Ah, here you are.
- B) I didn't print out my ticket. Here's my passport.
- C) Actually, I didn't print out my e-ticket. Is just a passport okay?

I'm sorry, Sir but this is a ticket for the flight at this time tomorrow.

- A) I know it is. I want to change it.
- B) Really? I must have misread the information. Would it be possible to change it?

Would you like an aisle or a window seat?

- A) Aisle, please.
- B) Please give me a window seat.
- C) I don't mind.
- D) Either is fine.
- E) Actually, I have a special request. If at all possible, I need to sit near a toilet because...

How many items of luggage do you have?

- A) Yes, I do. This and this.
- B) These two suitcases to check in, plus this hand luggage.
- C) Just these two.

Please put your check-in luggage on the belt.

- A) Okay. Should I put them all on together?
- B) Okay. Please go ahead.
- C) Actually, I was hoping to take both of these as hand luggage, if possible.

I'm sorry, Madam. This luggage is over the weight limit.

- A) No, it isn't.
- B) Really? How much by?
- C) Ah yes, I realised that. Will I need to pay some kind of surcharge?

Is there anything sharp or dangerous in your luggage?

- A) Just a pair of scissors.
- B) No, there isn't.
- C) No, nothing.

Did you pack this luggage yourself?

- A) Yes, I did.
- B) Actually, my wife packed it for me.

Did anyone else ask you to carry anything for them?

- A) Yes, just some presents for my nephews and nieces.
- B) No.
- C) No, nothing.

Good and bad responses on a plane

Would you like anything to drink?

- A) Yes, please. Can I have another one of these?
- B) Yes, please. Do you have any whisky?
- C) Yes, please. What do you have?
- D) No, that's okay, thanks. I haven't finished this one yet.
- E) No, that's okay, thanks. I brought my own bottle of whisky.

Ice and lemon?

- A) Yes please.
- B) Ice and lemon.
- C) Just ice, please.
- D) No, that's okay, thanks. Just as it is.

(Would you like the) chicken or fish?

- A) Chicken, please.
- B) Sorry, what kind of fish is it? I'm allergic to some kinds.
- C) Vegetarian, please.
- D) (Sorry) (I forgot to order it, but) is there a vegetarian option?

Yes, Sir. How can I help you?

- A) Sorry, could I have another blanket?
- B) I'm afraid I can't get my entertainment system to work.
- C) Is it too late to order some duty free?
- D) Do you have any spare landing cards?
- E) Could you possibly explain how to fill this in?
- F) Coffee with milk and two sugars.
- G) Is there any more tea?

Sorry, can I get past?

- A) Of course. Here you are.
- B) Of course. I'll just get up. It's easier that way.
- C) Actually I was just thinking of going to the toilet too. Just a moment while I get my seatbelt off.

Do you need an immigration card?

- A) Yes please.
- B) Yes, can I have two please?
- C) No thanks.
- D) I'm not sure. I'm just transiting in the States. Do I need one?
- E) I'm not sure. Let me think.

Sorry, Madam, can you secure your seatbelt? We are approaching an area of turbulence.

- A) Yes please.
- B) Of course. Sorry, I thought I'd already done it up.
- C) Oh, okay. Sorry.

Good and bad responses at immigration

What is the purpose of your visit?

- A) I have a meeting with an American company, then we'll spend two days in Disney World.
- B) I'm attending a conference in Las Vegas.
- C) Just pleasure.
- D) Nothing special.

Is this your first visit to the US?

- A) Yes, it is.
- B) I'm not sure. Probably.
- C) Well, I was here as a child, but it's the first time since then.
- D) No, it's my fifth or sixth time. I work for an American company.

Are you travelling alone?

- A) Yes, I am.
- B) Not exactly. My colleagues arrived yesterday, so I'll meet them in Washington.
- C) No, I'm with my colleague just over there.
- D) Why do you ask?

Do you have any family here in the United States?

- A) No, I don't.
- B) Not that I know of.
- C) Probably not.
- D) Just a couple of distant cousins, in Philadelphia I think.

Where are you staying in the USA?

- A) Apartment 23, 3456 Fifth Street, Manhattan, New York, New York, zip code 176 8890, telephone number 010 7766 5434.
- B) The Pleasant Hotel in Manhattan.
- C) I'm staying with a friend in Long Island.
- D) In a business hotel. The address is written here.

Is New York your final destination?

- A) Yes, it is. I have some business meetings in Manhattan.
- B) Yes, it is.
- C) Kind of. I'm visiting a company just over the river in New Jersey.
- D) No. I'm catching a flight to Buenos Aires tonight.
- E) It depends what you mean by "final".

I'm afraid we need to ask you a few more questions. Please come with me.

- A) Okay. Can I ask what the problem is?
- B) Seriously? Are you kidding? What on earth for?

Okay, enjoy your stay in America.

- A) Thanks.
- B) Thanks. You too.

Good and bad responses at customs

Do you have anything to declare?

- A) Just this bottle of champagne.
- B) No, nothing.
- C) No, I don't think so.
- D) Probably not.
- E) Actually, I'm not sure if I need to declare this. It's...

Are you carrying any plants or food stuffs?

- A) No, I'm not.
- B) Just a packet of peanuts from the plane.
- C) Just a few seeds.

Can you open this bag for me?

- A) Certainly. Please wait. Okay, it's open.
- B) Okay. Just a moment. Here you are.
- C) Sure. Just a minute while I find the key. Ah, got it. Here you go.

What are these materials here?

- A) They are some samples of our products which I will give my customer while I'm here.
- B) They are some samples of our products which I'm planning to sell while I'm here.

Is this honey?

- A) Why do you ask?
- B) Yes, that's right. Is that a problem?
- C) No, it's just golden syrup. It's made from sugar.

I'm afraid this product is restricted. You cannot bring it into New Zealand.

- A) Really? I had no idea. I guess that means I'll have to throw it away then?
- B) Is that right? Sorry about that. Is it possible to keep it somewhere and pick it up again on my way back out of the country?
- C) But it's only small. Can you just let me take half, perhaps?

I'm afraid we need to search your luggage more carefully. Please follow me.

- A) Really? Oh, okay then.
- B) What? No! I'm innocent. I've done nothing wrong! It's not my fault!

Okay, Sir, that's fine. You can close your luggage again now. Have a good day.

- A) Thanks.
- B) Thanks. You too.
- C) Thanks, you have been a great help. I look forward to doing business together again soon.

Good and bad responses when taking a taxi

Can I help you with your luggage?

- A) Yes, please. It's pretty heavy! (Perhaps we should lift it together.)
- B) Yes please. That would be a great help.
- C) No thank you. I am strong enough.
- D) No, that's okay, thanks. I think I can manage.

Where to?

- A) Please take me to Manhattan.
- B) Can you take me to the ABC convention centre in Brooklyn?
- C) The JFK Intercontinental Hotel please.

Do you know which area that is in?

- A) No, I don't. That's your job.
- B) I'm afraid not. Just a second while I have a look on my phone.
- C) I'm pretty sure it's in Hampstead. Does that sound right?

Which terminal do you need?

- A) Terminal 3, please.
- B) The terminal for JAL flights to Japan.
- C) Sorry, I didn't check. Do you know which terminal Delta flies from?

Shall I take the expressway?

- A) Sure. How much will it cost?
- B) I'm not sure. How much time will it save?
- C) No, thank you.
- D) I'd rather not, if you don't mind. I'd like to see more of the city and I'm not in a hurry.

Where exactly?

- A) Here.
- B) Here is fine.
- C) Anywhere along here is okay.
- D) Can you drop me on the corner on the left?
- E) Just in front of that department store, please.
- F) Sorry, we've already gone past. I didn't notice. Can you take me back one block?
- G) If possible, could you do a U turn and drop me on the other side of the road?

That's seventy three dollars, please.

- A) Do you have change for a hundred?
- B) Here's a hundred. Please keep the change.
- C) Here you are. And please get one for yourself.
- D) Okay. Thanks. Can I pay by credit card?
- E) Here you are. Can I have a receipt?

Do you need a receipt?

- A) Yes, please give me a receipt.
- B) No, that's okay, thanks.

Good and bad responses in a hotel

Good evening, Sir. Do you have a reservation?

- A) I do. It's in the name of Kaneko.
- B) Yes, I do. Here is a printout of my reservation confirmation email.
- C) Yes, two nights in a smoking double room.
- D) Two nights in a non-smoking twin, please.
- E) Actually, I don't. Do you have any rooms free?

So, it's a non-smoking room with twin beds for two nights. Is that right?

- A) Yes, that's right.
- B) Yes, that's right, but with an extra bed.
- C) Actually, I meant to book a double room. Did I book the wrong thing?
- D) No, that's wrong. It should be a smoking room.

Do you have any identification?

- A) Of course. Here is my passport.
- B) Yes, I do. Here is my business card.
- C) Actually, I didn't bring my passport. Is a driving license okay?
- D) I do. Just a moment while I find my ID card.

Can you fill in this form?

- A) Sure. Where should I write?
- B) Of course. Do you have a pen?
- C) I'd rather not, if you don't mind.
- D) Sorry, I can't understand it very well. If I say the information, could you fill it in for me?

Can I help you with anything else?

- A) Yes, can you tell me if there is a gym in the hotel?
- B) Yes, please. Can you give me some information on the hotel pool?
- C) Just one more thing. Can I have a wake-up call at six a.m. tomorrow, please?
- D) No, you can't help me with anything else.
- E) No, I think that's everything for now, thanks.

Do you need any help with your bags?

- A) Yes, please. It's these three.
- B) Yes, please. I'll hang onto this one, though.
- C) Yes, please. Just a moment while I zip them up.
- D) That would be great, but can you wait a second while I get something from this bag?
- E) Yes, please. I think I can manage, thanks.
- F) No, that's okay. I can manage, thanks.

The light switches are here, here and here. The air conditioning controls are here and the remote control is here. Is there anything else I can help you with?

- A) Yes, that all seems clear, thanks.
- B) No, that all seems clear, thanks.
- C) No, that all seems clear, thanks. This is for you.
- D) Actually, just one more thing. Can you tell me...?

Suggested answers with the bad responses in **bold**
Good and bad responses at an airport check-in desk

Good morning, Madam. Can I see your ticket and passport, please?

- Of course. Just a moment while I get them out of my bag. Where are they? Ah, here you are.
- **I didn't print out my ticket. Here's my passport.**
- Actually, I didn't print out my e-ticket. Is just a passport okay?

I'm sorry, Sir but this is a ticket for the flight at this time tomorrow.

- **I know it is. I want to change it.**
- Really? I must have misread the information. Would it be possible to change it?

Would you like an aisle or a window seat?

- Aisle, please.
- **Please give me a window seat.**
- I don't mind.
- Either is fine.
- Actually, I have a special request. If at all possible, I need to sit near a toilet because...

How many items of luggage do you have?

- **Yes, I do. This and this.**
- These two suitcases to check in, plus this hand luggage.
- Just these two.

Please put your check-in luggage on the belt.

- Okay. Should I put them all on together?
- **Okay. Please go ahead.**
- Actually, I was hoping to take both of these as hand luggage, if possible.

I'm sorry, Madam. This luggage is over the weight limit.

- **No, it isn't.**
- Really? How much by?
- Ah yes, I realised that. Will I need to pay some kind of surcharge?

Is there anything sharp or dangerous in your luggage?

- **Just a pair of scissors.**
- No, there isn't.
- No, nothing.

Did you pack this luggage yourself?

- Yes, I did.
- **Actually, my wife packed it for me.**

Did anyone else ask you to carry anything for them?

- **Yes, just some presents for my nephews and nieces.**
- No.
- No, nothing.

Good and bad responses on a plane

Would you like anything to drink?

- Yes, please. Can I have another one of these?
- Yes, please. Do you have any whisky?
- Yes, please. What do you have?
- No, that's okay, thanks. I haven't finished this one yet.
- **No, that's okay, thanks. I brought my own bottle of whisky.**

Ice and lemon?

- Yes please.
- **Ice and lemon.**
- Just ice, please.
- No, that's okay, thanks. Just as it is.

(Would you like the) chicken or fish?

- Chicken, please.
- Sorry, what kind of fish is it? I'm allergic to some kinds.
- **Vegetarian, please.**
- (Sorry) (I forgot to order it, but) is there a vegetarian option?

Yes, Sir. How can I help you?

- Sorry, could I have another blanket?
- I'm afraid I can't get my entertainment system to work.
- Is it too late to order some duty free?
- Do you have any spare landing cards?
- Could you possibly explain how to fill this in?
- **Coffee with milk and two sugars.**
- Is there any more tea?

Sorry, can I get past?

- **Of course. Here you are.**
- Of course. I'll just get up. It's easier that way.
- Actually I was just thinking of going to the toilet too. Just a moment while I get my seatbelt off.

Do you need an immigration card?

- Yes please.
- Yes, can I have two please?
- No thanks.
- I'm not sure. I'm just transiting in the States. Do I need one?
- **I'm not sure. Let me think.**

Sorry, Madam, can you secure your seatbelt? We are approaching an area of turbulence.

- **Yes please.**
- Of course. Sorry, I thought I'd already done it up.
- Oh, okay. Sorry.

Good and bad responses at immigration

What is the purpose of your visit?

- I have a meeting with an American company, then we'll spend two days in Disney World.
- I'm attending a conference in Las Vegas.
- Just pleasure.
- **Nothing special.**

Is this your first visit to the US?

- Yes, it is.
- **I'm not sure. Probably.**
- Well, I was here as a child, but it's the first time since then.
- No, it's my fifth or sixth time. I work for an American company.

Are you travelling alone?

- Yes, I am.
- Not exactly. My colleagues arrived yesterday, so I'll meet them in Washington.
- No, I'm with my colleague just over there.
- **Why do you ask?**

Do you have any family here in the United States?

- No, I don't.
- Not that I know of.
- **Probably not.**
- Just a couple of distant cousins, in Philadelphia I think.

Where are you staying in the USA?

- **Apartment 23, 3456 Fifth Street, Manhattan, New York, New York, zip code 176 8890, telephone number 010 7766 5434.**
- The Pleasant Hotel in Manhattan.
- I'm staying with a friend in Long Island.
- In a business hotel. The address is written here.

Is New York your final destination?

- Yes, it is. I have some business meetings in Manhattan.
- Yes, it is.
- Kind of. I'm visiting a company just over the river in New Jersey.
- No. I'm catching a flight to Buenos Aires tonight.
- **It depends what you mean by "final".**

I'm afraid we need to ask you a few more questions. Please come with me.

- Okay. Can I ask what the problem is?
- **Seriously? Are you kidding? What on earth for?**

Okay, enjoy your stay in America.

- Thanks.
- **Thanks. You too.**

Good and bad responses at customs

Do you have anything to declare?

- Just this bottle of champagne.
- No, nothing.
- No, I don't think so.
- **Probably not.**
- Actually, I'm not sure if I need to declare this. It's...

Are you carrying any plants or food stuffs?

- No, I'm not.
- Just a packet of peanuts from the plane.
- **Just a few seeds.**

Can you open this bag for me?

- **Certainly. Wait. Okay, it's open.**
- Okay. Just a moment. Here you are.
- Sure. Just a minute while I find the key. Ah, got it. Here you go.

What are these materials here?

- They are some samples of our products which I will give my customer while I'm here.
- **They are some samples of our products which I'm planning to sell while I'm here.**

Is this honey?

- **Why do you ask?**
- Yes, that's right. Is that a problem?
- No, it's just golden syrup. It's made from sugar.

I'm afraid this product is restricted. You cannot bring it into New Zealand.

- Really? I had no idea. I guess that means I'll have to throw it away then?
- Is that right? Sorry about that. Is it possible to keep it somewhere and pick it up again on my way back out of the country?
- **But it's only small. Can you just let me take half, perhaps?**

I'm afraid we need to search your luggage more carefully. Please follow me.

- Really? Oh, okay then.
- **What? No! I'm innocent. I've done nothing wrong! It's not my fault!**

Okay, Sir, that's fine. You can close your luggage again now. Have a good day.

- Thanks.
- Thanks. You too.
- **Thanks, you have been a great help. I look forward to doing business together again soon.**

Good and bad responses in a taxi

Can I help you with your luggage?

- Yes, please. It's pretty heavy! (Perhaps we should lift it together.)
- Yes please. That would be a great help.
- **No thank you. I am strong enough.**
- No, that's okay, thanks. I think I can manage.

Where to?

- **Please take me to Manhattan.**
- Can you take me to the ABC convention centre in Brooklyn?
- The JFK Intercontinental Hotel please.

Do you know which area that is in?

- **No, I don't. That's your job.**
- I'm afraid not. Just a second while I have a look on my phone.
- I'm pretty sure it's in Hampstead. Does that sound right?

Which terminal do you need?

- Terminal 3, please.
- **The terminal for JAL flights to Japan.**
- Sorry, I didn't check. Do you know which terminal Delta flies from?

Shall I take the expressway?

- Sure. How much will it cost?
- I'm not sure. How much time will it save?
- **No, thank you.**
- I'd rather not, if you don't mind. I'd like to see more of the city and I'm not in a hurry.

Where exactly?

- **Here.**
- Here is fine.
- Anywhere along here is okay.
- Can you drop me on the corner on the left?
- Just in front of that department store, please.
- Sorry, we've already gone past. I didn't notice. Can you take me back one block?
- If possible, could you do a U turn and drop me on the other side of the road?

That's seventy three dollars, please.

- Do you have change for a hundred?
- Here's a hundred. Please keep the change.
- **Here you are. And please get one for yourself.**
- Okay. Thanks. Can I pay by credit card?
- Here you are. Can I have a receipt?

Do you need a receipt?

- **Yes, please give me a receipt.**
- No, that's okay, thanks.

Good and bad responses in a hotel

Good evening, Sir. Do you have a reservation?

- I do. It's in the name of Kaneko.
- Yes, I do. Here is a printout of my reservation confirmation email.
- Yes, two nights in a smoking double room.
- **Two nights in a non-smoking twin, please.**
- Actually, I don't. Do you have any rooms free?

So, it's a non-smoking room with twin beds for two nights. Is that right?

- Yes, that's right.
- Yes, that's right, but with an extra bed.
- Actually, I meant to book a double room. Did I book the wrong thing?
- **No, that's wrong. It should be a smoking room.**

Do you have any identification?

- Of course. Here is my passport.
- **Yes, I do. Here is my business card.**
- Actually, I didn't bring my passport. Is a driving license okay?
- I do. Just a moment while I find my ID card.

Can you fill in this form?

- Sure. Where should I write?
- Of course. Do you have a pen?
- **I'd rather not, if you don't mind.**
- Sorry, I can't understand it very well. If I say the information, could you fill it in for me?

Can I help you with anything else?

- Yes, can you tell me if there is a gym in the hotel?
- Yes, please. Can you give me some information on the hotel pool?
- Just one more thing. Can I have a wake-up call at six a.m. tomorrow, please?
- **No, you can't help me with anything else.**
- No, I think that's everything for now, thanks.

Do you need any help with your bags?

- Yes, please. It's these three.
- Yes, please. I'll hang onto this one, though.
- Yes, please. Just a moment while I zip them up.
- That would be great, but can you wait a second while I get something from this bag?
- **Yes, please. I think I can manage, thanks.**
- No, that's okay. I can manage, thanks.

The light switches are here, here and here. The air conditioning controls are here and the remote control is here. Is there anything else I can help you with?

- **Yes, that all seems clear, thanks.**
- No, that all seems clear, thanks.
- No, that all seems clear, thanks. This is for you.
- Actually, just one more thing. Can you tell me...?

Brainstorming stage 1

Try to think of or remember at least one good response for each of the phrases below. Correct answers different from those above are also possible.

At an airport check-in desk

Good morning, Madam. Can I see your ticket and passport, please?

I'm sorry, Sir but this is a ticket for the flight at this time tomorrow.

Would you like an aisle or a window seat?

How many items of luggage do you have?

Please put your check-in luggage on the belt.

I'm sorry, Madam. This luggage is over the weight limit.

Is there anything sharp or dangerous in your luggage?

Did you pack this luggage yourself?

Did anyone else ask you to carry anything for them?

On a plane

Would you like anything to drink?

Ice and lemon?

(Would you like the) chicken or fish?

Yes, Sir. How can I help you?

Sorry, can I get past?

Do you need an immigration card?

Sorry, Madam, can you secure your seatbelt? We are approaching an area of turbulence.

At immigration

What is the purpose of your visit?

Is this your first visit to the US?

Are you travelling alone?

Do you have any family here in the United States?

Where are you staying in the USA?

Is New York your final destination?

I'm afraid we need to ask you a few more questions. Please come with me.

Okay, enjoy your stay in America.

At customs

Do you have anything to declare?

Are you carrying any plants or food stuffs?

Can you open this bag for me?

What are these materials here?

Is this honey?

I'm afraid this product is restricted. You cannot bring it into New Zealand.

I'm afraid we need to search your luggage more carefully. Please follow me.

Okay, Sir, that's fine. You can close your luggage again now. Have a good day.

In a taxi

Can I help you with your luggage?

Where to?

Do you know which area that is in?

Which terminal do you need?

Shall I take the expressway?

Where exactly?

That's seventy three dollars, please.

Do you need a receipt?

In a hotel

Good evening, Sir. Do you have a reservation?

So, it's a non-smoking room with twin beds for two nights. Is that right?

Do you have any identification?

Can you fill in this form?

Can I help you with anything else?

Do you need any help with your bags?

The light switches are here, here and here. The air conditioning controls are here and the remote control is here. Is there anything else I can help you with?

Compare your ideas with those above, brainstorm more, then compare your extra phrases as a class.

Brainstorming stage 2

Without looking above for now, brainstorm things that you might hear in the situations below, each with at least one suitable response. Many things not written above are okay.

At an airport check-in desk

On a plane

At immigration

At customs

In a taxi

In a hotel

Compare your ideas with those above, brainstorm more, then compare your extra ideas as a class.