

## Telephoning vocabulary and collocations

Choose one of the things below and explain what it means and how it is used **without saying the words you have chosen** until your partner guesses words you are explaining.

(Post It) note	(automatic) redial
(bad/ weak) signal	(forward) slash
(public) phone box/ payphone/ phone booth	(international) dialling code
(video) conference call	0898 number/ premium rate number
911/ 999/ emergency services	Skype/ VoIP
answer/ pick up	answering machine
area code	asterisk/ star (key)
automatic switchboard	away from her/ his desk
background noise	busy/ engaged (tone)
call again/ phone again/ ring back/ try again	call back/ phone back/ ring back
call centre/ helpline	call waiting
cell(phone)/ mobile (phone)	check it back/ read it back
cold calling	collect call/ reverse the charges
contact/ get in touch with	crossed line
cut off	dash/ hyphen
dial	dialling tone
dictate	directory enquiries
dot	double
emoticon	extension (number)
flat/ low battery	freephone/ toll free (number)
get through	give someone a call/ ring
hands-free	handset/ receiver
hang up/ put the phone down	hash (key)/ pound (key)
headset	hold (the line)
hold on	home phone
keypad (lock)	landline
leave a message	local rate (call)
new word	noise on the line
off (of work)	on another line
operator	out of the country/ office
pass something on	phone bill
prepaid	put you through/ transfer your call
reception/ receptionist	recharger (cradle)
recorded message	smartphone
switchboard	take a message
take down	telephone directory/ Yellow Pages
telesales	touch tone
treble/ triple	unattainable
underline/ underscore	voicemail
	wrong number

*Listen to your teacher do the same, then do the same in pairs but with Student A and Student B worksheets.*

### Suggested phrases for teacher-led guessing game

1. **Answer** – Answering machine/ Answer phone/ There is no answer/ We aim to answer all calls within three rings/ I'm afraid I can't answer the phone at the moment/ You're through to the answering machine of Alex Case/ She isn't answering her phone
2. **Back** – Call someone back/ Check something back/ Get back to someone/ When she gets back
3. **Battery** – Low battery/ Flat battery
4. **Busy** – Busy signal/ I know you're very busy, but I just needed to...
5. **Bye** – Bye for now/ Okay. Thanks. Bye/ Goodbye
6. **Call** – Call waiting/ Call centre/ Cold calling/ Collect call/ I'm returning your call/ I'll tell him you called/ Call someone back/ Could you tell him I called?/ I'm afraid I'm not available to take your call at the moment/ There is no one available to take your call/ Who shall I say is calling?/ Can I ask who is calling?/ Missed call/ International calling card/ I'm returning your call/ Accept a call/ I have a call on another line
7. **Check** – Can I check that back/ I'll check if he's available. Please hold the line/ Just a moment, I'll check on my computer
8. **Code** – Area code/ International dialling code
9. **Conference** – I'm afraid he's at a conference all day/ We met at a conference last week/ Video conference/ Conference call
10. **Desk** – Away from his desk/ Not at his desk/ I'll leave a message on his desk/ Simon Pitman's desk. Alex speaking. How can I help you?
11. **Dial** – Redial/ Misdial/ Automatic redial/ Dialling tone/ Dial a number
12. **Directory** – Directory enquiries/ Telephone directory
13. **Get** – Get through/ Get back to you

### Student A

*Choose one of the lists below and read out one example with the key word missing. Your partner can guess just once what the missing word is. Continue giving them other examples from the same list until they get it right or you run out of examples, making up more examples when the ones below are finished if you can.*

1. **Hand** – I don't have it to hand/ Hands-free/ Please replace the handset and try again
2. **Head** – Headset
3. **Hold** – Hold on/ Please hold (the line)/ Can you hold?/ I'm putting you on hold
4. **Home** – Home number/ Home phone/ We're not home at the moment, so please leave a message after the beep
5. **In** – In a meeting/ Can I speak to someone in the marketing department?/ I'm afraid he's not in today
6. **Key** – Hash key/ Pound key/ Star key/ Keypad
7. **Leave** – Please leave your name and number/ Leave a message
8. **Line** – The line was cut/ A bad line/ Helpline/ Landline/ Hold the line/ The line went dead/ Someone's trying to get through on another line/ I have someone on another line
9. **Low** – Low signal/ Low battery
10. **Mail** – Voicemail
11. **Message** – Recorded message/ Take a message/ Pass your message onto him/ Please leave a message after the beep/ I got a message that I should call you/ Instant messaging
12. **Moment** – There's no one here at the moment/ Just a moment (I'll get a pen and paper/ I'll get it up on the screen)
13. **Note** –Post-it note/ Make a note of/ Leave a note
14. **Number** – Extension number/ Home number/ Mobile number/ Office number/ Wrong number
15. **Off** – Off the hook/ Off work/ Cut off
16. **Office** – Out of the office/ Office phone/ Office number.

## Student B

Choose one of the lists below and read out one example with the key word missing. Your partner can guess just once what the missing word is. Continue giving them other examples from the same list until they get it right or you run out of examples, making up more examples when the ones below are finished if you can.

1. **On** – On another line/ Pass that message on to him/ Get it up on the screen/ On the phone
2. **Operator** – All our operators are busy right now/ Call centre operator/ Or press three to speak to an operator
3. **Phone** – Phone you back/ Thanks for phoning/ Mobile phone/ Smart phone/ Cell phone/ Phone box/ Phone booth/ Phone again/ Public phone/ Payphone/ Freephone/ Phone card/ I'm phoning about the conference next week/ Alex Case's phone
4. **Please** – Please leave a message after the tone
5. **Put** – Put the phone down/ Put someone through/ Put someone on hold
6. **Rate** – Local rate/ Premium rate
7. **Ring** – Give me a ring/ Ring me back/ Within three rings/ It's ringing, but no one is picking up/ Just let it ring/ Ringing tone
8. **Sorry** – Sorry it took me so long to get back to you/ Sorry to keep you waiting/ Sorry, he's out of the office at the moment/ Sorry. Can you speak a little louder?/ Sorry, we were cut off/ Sorry, I went into a tunnel
9. **Speak** – Speak up/ Speaker phone/ Can I speak to... please?/ This is John speaking/ HLDS. Alex speaking. How can I help you?/ Speak to you soon/ Speak to you then
10. **Take** – Take a message/ Take care/ Can I take your name, please?
11. **Talk** – Do you have time to talk?
12. **Text** – Send a text/ Textspeak/ Text someone
13. **Thanks/ Thank you** – Thanks again/ Thanks in advance/ Thanks for calling/ Thanks for your email...
14. **Tone** – Dialling tone/ Engaged tone/ Busy tone/ Please speak after the tone/ Ringing tone
15. **Up** – Hang up/ Speak up/ Pick up