

Gadget Central

Easy Street

HELLO? HELLO? CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

WE can hear you—and we *don't want* to hear you!

Come on, admit it. We know it's happened to you, too. You were sitting quietly on the bus, reading your newspaper, when she took the seat next to you.

Yak, yak, yak! You heard all about her boyfriend's cooking skills. You heard about her sister's new chocolate diet. You heard about the neighbor's dog. Do you care? *We don't care!*

Okay, we all love our cell phones. They make it easy to stay **in touch** with friends and family at all times. The convenient **features** of smartphones are **irresistible**: hi-tech cameras, HD video, data and high speed Internet access, cool **ring tones**, and GPS **guidance** to help you get where you want to go! Come on, admit it. You love the **touch screens**, games, and **apps** that can help you do just about anything you need to do. Want to find a restaurant near your class tonight? Check your phone. Need a map of the neighborhood? Check your phone. Want to know what movie is showing at the theater on Tuesday? Check your phone.



Oh, and if you just want to make a phone call, you can do that, too. Haha!

All of these communication conveniences come at a cost, and we're not just talking about the monthly bill! Ha, but now that we've mentioned it, let's talk about the monthly bill. Be sure you know the limits of your **plan**. If you don't have unlimited data you may be surprised with a **hefty** charge if you go over the allowed amount. If you're planning to call internationally, you might want a plan with special lower rates for those calls. Some plans allow unlimited international **texting** to some countries, but not to all. Know what your plan covers!

But the biggest cost of all this convenience is suffering when people don't **observe** simple phone **etiquette**. It's **rude** to speak loudly on the phone in a public place. It's rude when your phone rings or vibrates in a meeting. It's rude when you **interrupt** a **face-to-face** conversation to **answer** a phone call. Many places **ban** cell phone use. Some trains have special "quiet cars" where no cell phones are allowed. Good cell phone etiquette means that you are respectful of others around you. No matter how interesting your **bowl of cereal** is to you, trust us: The guy sitting next to you does not want to hear about it!

DIALOGUE: AUDIO TRACK 49

ALAN: Good morning, Officer. Did you pull me over for speeding? I thought I was being very careful.

POLICE OFFICER: Sir, I didn't pull you over for speeding. I pulled you over because you were talking on a **handheld device** while driving.

ALAN: For talking on the phone? Is that a problem? My wife just called to remind me about an appointment when I get back from my business trip.

POLICE OFFICER: Sir, using a handheld device while driving is **illegal** in this state. I can see from your **plates** that you're from out of town, so I'll **let you go** with just a warning this time. But, sir, next time just check the law before your trip. Most states regulate cell phone use while driving.

ALAN: I will do that, Officer. I guess I just need a newer car with **Bluetooth!**

POLICE OFFICER: By the way, it's a good thing you weren't texting when I pulled you over. Texting while driving is even more dangerous than talking. You might want to think about getting a hands-free device if you do a lot of driving for business.



It is illegal in many states to use a cell phone while driving. You should check ahead if you're traveling. Actually, it's a good idea to turn off the phone while you're in the car no matter where you are!

VOCABULARY

- **answer:** take the phone call
- **app:** a game or tool that you can download to your phone; a useful productivity or entertainment feature
- **ban:** not allow; forbid
- **Bluetooth:** the special system that lets electronic devices work without wires or hands
- **bowl of cereal:** a typical American breakfast made of dried grains like wheat and oats
- **etiquette:** ways to be polite
- **face-to-face:** in person; with the person right there
- **features:** special things something can do
- **guidance:** help
- **handheld device:** a phone or other device that needs hands to operate
- **hefty:** very large; also, very heavy, strong
- **illegal:** against the law
- **interrupt:** stop something while it's going on
- ① **in touch:** connected by talking
- **irresistible:** so great you *have* to have it!
- **observe:** obey; use
- **plan:** the services you select for a certain price per month
- **plates** (also **tags**): license plates on a car
- **ring tone:** the sound your phone makes to let you know someone is calling
- **rude:** not polite
- **texting:** sending typed messages by cell phone
- **touch screen:** instead of typing, just touch to select an option
- ① **yak:** have a very casual conversation (usually about nothing!)



PRONUNCIATION POINTER

Cell and **sell** are both pronounced the same way. The fancy word we use to talk about these words is *homophones*. Homophones are words that sound the same but are spelled differently.

GRAMMAR REMINDER 1: The Past Continuous Tense with the Past Simple Tense

The past continuous tense is often used with the simple past tense to show one longer action that was interrupted by a shorter action.

For example:

He **was speeding** when the police officer **stopped** him.

Was speeding is the long action; **stopped** is the action that interrupts the longer action.

THE EASY WAY

Remember books? We remember books. The paper kind. With pages. (Hey, you're reading one now!) In the **good old days** before computers, people read books and newspapers to get information. Students spent hours and hours in the library, looking for information in **dusty** old books for class assignments. **Essays** were **handwritten**; if a student made

a mistake, they would **toss** the paper and start writing all over again.

Now? Information is **instant!** Students can find anything on the Internet in seconds and then **compose** a **document** on their **laptops**, all while sitting on the sofa. If they make a mistake, they can just **delete** or **cut, copy, and paste** to move bits of text around. Maybe the most important computer skill is knowing how to **back up** your files in case your computer **crashes**, or you drop your device in the lake! Documents and files can be sent to "the cloud" for storage. We're not really sure what "the cloud" is, but we know it makes it easy to find stuff from any device! Ha, we remember when all we got from clouds was rain! We still like to keep another backup



file, just to be doubly sure that our hard work won't be lost forever in **cyberspace**.

We also remember the library in the good old days. It was a place where everyone was quiet. **Hum** along to an iPod **tune**? Never! Send an **email** while working? What's email? Watch a movie on the **HDTV** while you work? Impossible! Download **MP3s** to your **hard drive** or **device**? No! But now students can watch **YouTube** videos about their **research** topic as they write a paper. And as they are writing, they can Snapchat with friends in another **window** on their computer **screen**. A simple **click** of the **mouse**, **hit SAVE**, and students can take a quick chat break. Wait. Did you think we were talking about chatting with someone in the actual same room? No! We're talking about **online** chat with everyone in their own room. Come on, there's nothing more fun than **FaceTiming** Grandma instead of finishing that physics paper!

Do we sound like **dinosaurs**? Actually, we love technology. With **cable** and **satellite signals**, all our electronic devices can **broadcast** important local information instantly. In areas where **severe** weather is a problem, your phone is an excellent **source** of **warnings**. Your local radio or TV station can give information about where to get help or what to do to keep your family and home safe. Hurricane updates on your phone or TV can help you prepare your house. If a tornado is coming, you can get to a safe area. If there's a **snowstorm**, people often turn to technology and the media to hear about school closings. School is closing? Yay!

Technology is our friend! Instant communication is convenient, fun, and easy. But for those of us who still like to hold a piece of paper with the words of friends, there is always **snail mail**.



Fun Fact!

It's the latest thing: cell-phone **sniffing** dogs! Yes, many American prisons are using specially trained dogs that can smell and find any part of a cell phone that a prisoner may have hidden.

DIALOGUE: AUDIO TRACK 50

ALAN: Uh-oh.

LIA: That sounds like trouble. What happened?

ALAN: I was answering an email, and I hit **Reply All**.

LIA: So, what's the problem?

ALAN: Well, the problem is that my email reply said, “I don’t want to go to this meeting! I want to go to lunch!”

LIA: *Aaackkk!* Were you thinking that the email would just go to your friend?

ALAN: Yes! I wasn’t reading the other names on the list, so I didn’t see that the boss was also on the list!

LIA: Well, you really need to be careful about sending email. Once you hit *Send*, it’s gone. You can’t get it back.

ALAN: I know. And even if the email comes from a friend, I have to remember that there are other people on the list, too. The boss sent me a reply: “Is it your lunchtime, Alan?”

LIA: Well, I don’t think you’ll get fired over an email that says you want to go to lunch, but maybe you should explain to your boss that you were only kidding. It was just a little joke about going to lunch instead of going to the meeting. Was he wondering why you were so hungry?

ALAN: No. He wasn’t wondering why I was hungry. I think he was wondering why he hired me in the first place!



Before you reply to an email, be sure to check if you are hitting **Reply** or **Reply All**. *Reply All* means your note will be seen by every person on the list. This could be embarrassing if you write something you don’t want your boss to see and his or her name is on the list!

VOCABULARY

- **acronym:** a word formed by the first letters of a phrase (see list on page 239)
- **broadcast:** air (send) information over TV or radio signals
- **cable:** a way to receive TV service through fiber-optic wires
- **compose:** write
- ① **dinosaur:** ancient creatures that lived on earth millions of years ago; used to describe people who don’t use new technology

- **dusty**: with a light covering of dirt
- **essay**: a piece of writing about a single topic
- **FaceTime**: Apple’s technology for video calling
- ① **good old days**: how things were when you were younger
- **handwritten**: written with a pen or pencil on paper!
- **HDTV**: short for **H**igh **D**efinition **T**ele**V**ision; yields a very clear TV picture on the screen
- **hum**: sing a song without the words
- **instant**: right away! this second! no waiting!
- **satellite**: a way to receive TV service from satellites in space
- **severe**: very harsh
- **signal**: a message carried by light waves that lets electronic devices communicate (Don’t ask us—it’s science-y!)
- ① **snail mail**: the postal service
- ① **sniffing**: smelling
- **snowstorm** (also **blizzard**): lots of snow
- **source**: a place to get information
- **toss**: throw in the trash
- **tune**: a musical song or melody
- **warning**: advance notice about something
- **YouTube**: a website with videos about everything



PRONUNCIATION POINTER

They look exactly the same! They are spelled exactly the same way. But the present tense and the past tense of the verb *read* are pronounced very differently.

The present tense is pronounced ***reed***.

The past tense is pronounced ***red***.

GRAMMAR REMINDER 2: The Past Continuous Tense— Affirmative Statements, Negatives

The past continuous tense is used to talk about a long continuing action in the past.

Form it by using the past tense of the verb *to be* and the *-ing* form of the verb. To form the negative, simply add *not* or *-n't* after the verb *to be*.

Take a look at these examples from the readings and dialogues in this unit:

Positive:

You **were** sitting quietly on the bus.

I thought I **was being** very careful.

Negative:

It's a good thing you **weren't** texting. (*were not*)

I **wasn't** reading the other names on the list. (*was not*)

He **wasn't** wondering why I was hungry. (*was not*)

GRAMMAR REMINDER 3: The Past Continuous Tense— Questions

To form a question using the past continuous tense, just put the form of the verb *to be* first, then the subject, and finally the *-ing* form of the verb.

Take a look at these examples from the readings and dialogues in this unit:

Was I speeding?

Were you thinking that the email would just go to your friend?

Was he wondering why you were so hungry?

Remember to add a question word at the beginning as you need it, e.g., "**What** were you thinking?"

COMPUTER WORDS

back up: save your files in another place in case the computer stops working

click: the word we use to mean press the **key** (computer mouse button)

copy: the computer choice that lets you copy something you want to move

crash: when the computer stops working and you can't open your files

cut: the computer choice that lets you remove something from a document

cyberspace: where computers all communicate (It's a mystery to us 😊.)

delete: erase something you've written

desktop: a large computer that sits on a desk and does not move easily

document: something written on the computer
email: electronic mail; notes you send from your computer
hard drive: the important part of the computer with all the parts that make it work
hit: a casual word meaning *click*
laptop: a small computer that you can carry and use on your lap
mouse: a small device to make the computer do what you want (not a rodent!)
MP3: a file that lets you put music on your computer or iPod
online: connected to the Internet
paste: the computer choice that lets you move something you copied
Reply: what you click to answer email; sends *only* to the person who sent the message
Reply All: what you click to answer email if you want everyone on the list to get your message
save: the computer choice that keeps whatever you're working on in a file
screen: the part of the computer that you look at; on a desktop it's called the **monitor**
window: what you see on your screen when you open the computer

TEXT TALK!

It may seem like a whole new language, but using **acronyms** while texting or chatting can really save time. And because they're used as shortcuts, people often don't bother with capital letters.

Just make sure you keep these to text talk. A boss does *not* want to see these in reports!

ASAP: as soon as possible	K: okay
b/c: because	L8R: later (see you later)
bf: boyfriend	LOL: laughing out loud
bff: best friends forever	ROFL: rolling on the floor laughing
btw: by the way	thx: thanks
FAQ: frequently asked questions	ttyl: talk to you later
FYI: for your information	txt: text
gf: girlfriend	ty: thank you
GL: good luck	ur: your
gtg or gg: gotta go	VM: voice mail
j/k: just kidding	xoxo: hugs and kisses

MORE FUN WITH IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS: Technology

- **bells and whistles:** extra features to make something even more special
*Jane bought a new cell phone with all the **bells and whistles**. She can play games, access the Internet, and even make phone calls!*
- **cutting edge:** very new technology
*My computer is **cutting edge**. It can recognize my voice from the next room!*
- **computer geek:** someone who knows about computers and spends lots of time with them
*My nephew is a real **computer geek**. He spends hours every day just finding new things to do with his computer.*
- **dead zone:** an area where your cell phone won't work
*I need to find a new company for my cell phone. My house is in a **dead zone** for the one I have.*
- **waste of minutes:** not worth talking to; not worth using your cell-phone plan minutes
*He never has anything interesting to say. It's **yak, yak, yak** about nothing. Talking to him is a **waste of minutes**.*

PRACTICE: Technology

Match the idiomatic expression to its meaning. Answers are on page 302.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. _____ cutting edge | a. an area where your phone won't work |
| 2. _____ bells and whistles | b. something very new |
| 3. _____ dead zone | c. a person who knows lots about computers |
| 4. _____ waste of minutes | d. extra features to make something even more special |
| 5. _____ computer geek | e. not worth talking to/using your cell phone |

NEED TO KNOW!

There's one language that just about everyone knows. Yes, everyone speaks emoji! These EMOTIcons are perfect for expressing just about any EMOTIon. Match the EMOTIonal expression with the number of the best emoji. Have fun ☺! Answers are on page 302.



a



b



c



d



e



f



g



h



i



j

1. _____ I'm so tired!
2. _____ Ha, that's cool!
3. _____ That really makes me angry.
4. _____ I LOVE THAT! *or* I LOVE YOU!
5. _____ HAHA, I'm laughing so much that I'm crying!
6. _____ I'm sick! *or* I hate that so much it makes me sick.
7. _____ Eww, no! I hate that!
8. _____ I'm sad. *or* That's very sad.
9. _____ I'm worried.
10. _____ Whew! I'm not worried anymore!