

Teaching the Topic

To make appointments we usually use the phone. General telephone skills are important here. It helps to have a diary handy to negotiate a time, and a few important words written to refer to. Clarifying details is vital on the phone.

Resources

A diary or calendar with the learner's commitments for the next few days or weeks; a list of what people say to you or ask you when you make an appointment yourself.

Activities

- Discuss the purpose of the appointment – What is the problem? What is required? What does the learner want to happen as a result of the appointment?
- Focus on necessary vocabulary for the particular appointment.
- Practise introductory statements – *I need to see the doctor, Can I make an appointment with Mr Smith please?* Practise clear pronunciation of name, (family name first), address, phone number.
- Role play making the appointment – accepting a given time, negotiating a different time, perhaps explaining the situation briefly. The learner repeats what they hear to check they understand – time, other details. Get the learner to phone for the role play. Role play back-to-back if you can't use real phones.

Language

- *Urgent, in pain, can't sleep.*
- Ways of asking – *Can I...? Could I...? Is it possible to...? Would it be OK to...?*
- Use of *So...* to signal a summary of what was said.

Using the Worksheet

A possible introductory activity: Start by talking about making appointments. Has the learner done this in New Zealand? How did it go? What was difficult?

This worksheet is a phone interaction to make a doctor's appointment. The receptionist's words are given and the learner decides what Susan might say. The tutor reads the receptionist's words and the learner responds. Record the exchange, listen and discuss other ways of answering. There are several possibilities in some places. Then the learner can write the responses.

Main learning points

Listening skills, especially time, day and date. Answer questions, ask politely – *I'd like to make an appointment...* Clear pronunciation of names and spelling. Order information – say what we want before we give our name or details.

What else could be learnt?

Other ways of asking – *Can I get an appointment? Is it possible to get an appointment? Would I be able to get an appointment?*

Other ways people ask for names – *What was the name? Who am I talking to? Who is the appointment for? Who's speaking, please?*

Negotiating an earlier time for an urgent situation.



12 Making an appointment

Calling the receptionist

Susan Chen is phoning to make an appointment with the doctor. Read the telephone conversation and make suggestions. Write or say the best thing to answer the receptionist. If you want you can choose answers from the box below.



Receptionist: 'Good morning, Dr Sutherland's surgery. How can I help you?'

Susan Chen: '_____!'

Receptionist: 'OK. Dr Sutherland's next free appointment is on Thursday the 3rd at 4pm. Can you come in then?'

Susan Chen: '_____!'

Receptionist: 'Can you tell me your name, please?'

Susan Chen: '_____!'

Receptionist: 'Can you spell your family name for me?'

Susan Chen: '_____!'

Receptionist: 'And your phone number?'

Susan Chen: '_____!'

Receptionist: 'Have you been here before?'

Susan Chen: '_____, _____!'

Receptionist: 'Right, thanks. We'll see you on the 3rd at 4 o'clock, Ms Chen.'

Susan Chen: '_____!'



WORKSHEET – Photocopy for your learner or use as a model to create your own worksheet

C-h-e-n	Ok. See you then.	Yes, I have.	
Yes, that's fine.	439 5619	I'd like to make an appointment to see Dr Sutherland.	Yes, it's Susan Chen.