

## 2

## "Could you spell that for me?"



How good are you at giving information over the phone? Do this quiz on numbers and symbols. Compare your answers with a partner's, then check your answers in the key.

**1** How do you say these numbers in English?

- a 647
- b 9,235
- c 1,574,389
- d 1.955
- e €15.40
- f 0049 30 29706634



**2** What does a comma (,) show in an English number? And a point (.)?

**3** What are these symbols called in English?

- a b c d  
bob\_jones@abc-company.com
- e / \_\_\_\_\_
  - f \ \_\_\_\_\_
  - g # \_\_\_\_\_
  - h \* \_\_\_\_\_
  - i ( \_\_\_\_\_
  - j ) \_\_\_\_\_

See page 68 for more information about saying numbers and symbols in English.



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**1** Arnold Mácha works in a small import/export company in Prague. Listen to the two calls Arnold makes and receives, and correct the mistakes in the notes.

relay switch  
model RS 788

unit price:  
1000 units + €1.65  
2000 units + €11.39

Misha Oberemok  
delivery address

Mitscevitsh Ulittsa 6  
97000 Kiev  
Fax no. (+380 44)  
244 4240

#### VOCABULARY ASSISTANT

delivery address *místo dodání*  
digit *číslíce* to drop *klesnout*  
to get sent off *být odeslán*  
relay switch *reléový spínač*  
unit price *cena za kus*



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## 2 Listen to the dialogues again and complete the phrases below.

### Call 1

I have a question \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> your relay switches. Are you the \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> person to ask?

What \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup> your question?

Could you \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup> me what the unit price would be for orders over a thousand units?

It was the RS 877 you said, \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup>?

Sorry, I didn't \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup> the second price.

### Call 2

I'm \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> about the order you faxed us yesterday.

I just wanted to \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> it.

Do you have a \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>?

Would you like me to \_\_\_\_\_<sup>4</sup> that for you?

Let me just \_\_\_\_\_<sup>5</sup> that back to you.

Sorry, what was the post code \_\_\_\_\_<sup>6</sup>?

### HOW TO BE LESS DIRECT

Generally in English, the less direct a sentence is, the more polite it is. For example, we often use the past tense (*was, wanted*) instead of the present tense (*is, want*). The past tense is more polite, because it's less direct.

*What **was** your question?*

*I just **wanted** to check ...*

*I **wanted** to ask about ...*

Similarly, we often use 'could' and 'would' to make questions or statements less direct.

***Could** you tell me what the price **would be**? (instead of **Can** you tell me what the price **is**?)*

*What **would be** your preferred means of payment? (instead of What **is** your ...?)*

## 3 Rewrite the sentences below to make them less direct.

- 1 What is your question? What was your question?
- 2 Can you tell me your name? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 I just want to check the address. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 What is your name again? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 What do you want to know? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 What is your charge for delivery? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 How long does it take to send it? \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 I want to ask if you have time to meet tomorrow. \_\_\_\_\_