

Live Lesson Notes

Complaints

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1. Useful Links

My **GOLD online course** for **IELTS Speaking**

<https://courses.keithspeakingacademy.com/p/ielts-speaking-get-band-7-gold>

What makes good **customer service**

<https://www.zendesk.es/blog/good-customer-service-defined/#georedirect>

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IELTS Speaking Vocabulary: Complaints

Fill in the gap with one or two words

1. The service here is terrible, I am going to ____ a complaint
2. Will you stop ____ about the weather, we can't change it!

Answers at bottom of PDF

To **complain** (v.) + **to** someone / **about** something

*I want to complain **to** the management*

*I want to complain **about** the poor service*

To make a **complaint** (n.)

To make a complaint **to** someone

To make a complaint **against** someone

*He made a complaint **to** the management*

(to the person who will solve the problem)

*He made a complaint **against** his boss*

(against the person who caused the problem)

To make **a** complaint **about** something / someone

*He made **a** complaint **about** the long working hours*

More formal

To file / lodge / voice a complaint

To make a formal complaint **in** writing

What do people complain about?

1. General Everyday Complaints

Notice: All the following need the article 'the'

The weather

The government

The price of vegetables

The cost of living

Notice: All the following do not take 'the'

Inflation

Work

Low salary

Health

Politicians

Useful Verbs Meaning 'To complain'

To complain

To moan

To grumble

To go on about

To harp on about

To whinge

2. Specific Complaints

Bad customer service

- hotels
- restaurants
- shops

Faults with products

- have a defect [=something doesn't work]
- wrong colour
- wrong size
- broken

Delays and cancellations

- airports
- train stations
- meetings
- traffic jams

Unfair treatment at work, school or in a shop

- bullying
- harassment
- insults
- unfair dismissal
- discrimination.

People's behaviour

- littering
- being noisy
- being rude

IELTS Vocabulary: Complaints Listening Task

Listen and **mark** the words you can hear!

complain	moaning	grumble
moan	harping on about	grumbling
go on about	harp on about	whingeing

Answers at bottom of PDF

Customer Service

What makes good customer service?

Which of these is the most important?

Be professional

Listen carefully

Be friendly

Be empathetic

React quickly

Do everything the customer asks

Find out more about what makes good customer service here:

<https://www.zendesk.es/blog/good-customer-service-defined/#georedirect>

Collocations

Deal with / respond to / handle complaints

Solve / resolve / sort out a problem

“She dealt with the problem swiftly and it was all sorted out within 5 minutes; great customer service!”

Apologise **to** someone

Apologise **for / about** something

She apologised to me about the long delay.

He apologised for any inconvenience caused.

I was satisfied with the **outcome / result / solution**

IELTS Speaking Idioms: Complaining

To **kick_up a stink / fuss** = to complain noisily about something

My toddler always kicks up a fuss when it's time for bed, insisting on one more story.

To **go the extra mile** = to do more than is expected (when serving others)

Despite the lecture having finished, Lisa went the extra mile by staying on for half an hour answering extra questions.

To **make noises** = to complain or make trouble

If the waiter doesn't get the order right this time, I'm going to start making noises.

To **put your foot down** = To assert yourself firmly

When the train was delayed a third time, I decided to put my foot down and demanded a refund.

IELTS Speaking Part 2 Model Answer: A complaint

1. Listen and watch the model answer

What was the complaint about?

Answers below

2. Listen again and **note any useful vocabulary** (collocations or idioms)

Answers next page

A couple of years ago, **I found myself** in a charming little restaurant.

It was one of those places you hear about **through word of mouth** (*to hear about from other people, to hear on the grapevine*) and I had heard some **rave reviews** (*very good reviews*) about their [Ratatouille](#), a dish. So it was **a no-brainer** (*obvious choice*) what I was going to order.

Now, I'm not one to **kick up a fuss** usually. In fact, I tend **to shy away from** (*avoid*) any kind of conflict, but in that restaurant I had to **make an exception** (*not to do the usual thing*)

The waiter was very pleasant, handed me the menu, and I **placed my order** (*ordered*)

Some time passed, and my stomach was beginning to grumble, then the waiter arrived with my food. I thanked him, eager **to dig in** (*to start eating*)

I took one bite... and then another... but **something was off** (*was wrong*).

The vegetables were undercooked, and there was no seasoning. It was not what I was expecting. To be honest, it was **inedible** (*cannot be eaten*).

I felt I had to say something. I needed to **put my foot down**.

I **flagged the waiter down**, and when he arrived, I explained the situation.

I am sorry, but this isn't right. The vegetables aren't cooked, and the **seasoning is off** (*is wrong*), it's just **bland** (*has no taste*).

The waiter's face dropped (*show a surprised face*), he **apologised profusely** (*a lot*) and offered to change it. So I waited again for the same dish again.

Long story short, (*in summary, or to cut a long story short*) the chef came out personally with the new serving

This time it was great, the veggies **cooked to perfection**, the seasoning **spot on** (*to be perfect, exactly right*)

The chef apologised for the mishap and even offered a complimentary dessert to **make up for** it (*to compensate for*)

Just goes to show (*the moral or message is...*), you should complain if things aren't **up to the mark** (*good enough*).

ANSWERS

IELTS Speaking Vocabulary: Complaints

Fill in the gap with one or two words

1. The service here is terrible, I am going to **_make / file / _ / lodge / ___** a complaint

We can say '**send a complaint**' if it is by email or letter.

2. Will you stop **_complaining _ / whingeing / going on / grumbling _ / bothering ___** about the weather, we can't change it!

IELTS Vocabulary: Complaints Listening Task

Listen and **mark** the words you can hear!

The words mentioned are marked in green.

complain	moaning	grumble
moan	harping on about	grumbling
go on about	harp on about	whingeing

Full script:

The other day I met up with my friend Mr. **Grumble** and we went shopping together.

He was looking for a new phone so we went around a local shopping mall and he started **grumbling** about the price of the phones, about it being a *rip-off (too expensive)*, about the quality.

In the end, he was **whingeing** so much that I decided to take him for a coffee and a snack just *to perk up (cheer up / to be happier / in a better mood)*, but then he started **harping on about** the coffee. It's too cold, it's too weak.

Oh dear some people they're just never happy.

IELTS Speaking Part 2 Model Answer: A complaint

1. Listen and watch the model answer

What was the complaint about?

The complaint was about poor quality food in a restaurant.

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