

# GENERAL ENGLISH

## Lesson 8 – MAKING REQUESTS AND OFFERS



# Lesson 8 – Making Requests and Offers

## Introduction



Offers and requests are staples of the EFL world as well as in Business English. When you ask someone to do something for you, or ask if you can do something, it's important to sound polite.

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## Basic Structure

### Formal

Offering	Requesting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Would you like ... <i>[me]</i> to <i>calculate the costs for the project?</i></li><li>▪ Shall I ... <i>ask them to come in?</i></li><li>▪ May I ... <i>get you another coffee?</i></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ May I ...</li><li>▪ Would you mind if ...</li><li>▪ Would it be possible ...</li></ul>

### Informal

Offering	Requesting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ How about ... <i>getting together after the meeting?</i></li><li>▪ Do you want ... <i>another opinion?</i></li><li>▪ Can I ... <i>get you some more coffee?</i></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Can I ...</li><li>▪ Would you ...</li></ul>

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## Basic Structure

Accepting Offers	Rejecting Offers
Yes, that's kind of you Yes, that would be very nice Please! (less formal) You bet! (less formal) That sounds great! (less formal) Of course! Yes, that's no problem at all. Certainly. No problem! (informal)	No, thank you. That's very kind, but no, thank you I'm fine, thank you. No thank you, I'm fine. Certainly. No problem! (informal) I'm afraid not.

*\* of course, until we know someone well, language in the business environment should remain formal*  
*\*\* when refusing an offer or request it is always more polite to give a short simple reason. If your reason is too long and detailed, people may not believe it.*

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## Exercise

### CUSTOMER SERVICE



**Activity I. Work with a partner and create short dialogs from the table above. Make requests and offers and accept and reject them. Remember to play the role on both sides of the dialog.**

**Example:**

**"Can I help you?"**

**"Yes please. I'd like to know what time the train leaves."**

**"Can I help you?"**

**"No thanks, I'm just looking." (In a shop.)**

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## Exercise

**Activity II. Using the table below, work with a partner making offers and requests and accepting and rejecting them. Change roles and take the other side of the issue. Be sure to give a short reason why when you reject offers or requests. Accept AND reject each offer and request.**

<p>Request: Would you please help me calculate the costs for this new product?</p>	<p>Request: Can you meet me in the conference room in about five minutes?</p>
<p>Request: Would mind if I used the corporate jet for the trip to Miami?</p>	<p>Request: May I take Saturday off?</p>
<p>Offer: Can I help you with the Johnson account?</p>	<p>Offer: May I get you the financial reports that go with that?</p>
<p>Offer: Would you like me to help you with that?</p>	<p>Offer: How about another donut?</p>

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## Exercise



**Activity III. Now work with a partner making offers and requests that would be common where you work.**

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## Speaking Tip

- **Could** and **can** are followed by the verb without **to**.
  - **Would you mind** is followed by the verb and **-ing**.
  - **Could** is more polite than **can**.
  - **Do you mind if...** is followed by the verb in the **present tense**, but **would you mind if...** is followed by the verb in the **past tense**.
  - When you're using these two sentences, don't use **please**. It's already polite enough!
  - **Shall, can** and **will** are followed by the verb without **to**.
  - **Shall** is particularly British English and is more formal than **can**.
- Would you like...** is followed either by a noun, or by an object pronoun and the verb with **to**.





**Next Lesson:**

**EXPRESSING OPINIONS**

**The End**