

AL Mustaqbal University  
College of Education  
Department of English Language  
Real Listening & Speaking  
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1st class(2ed lecture)  
*(I'm phoning about the house)*  
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# Unit 2

## I'm phoning about the house

### Get ready to listen and speak

- Read the accommodation advertisements and match them to the pictures.



**A** **GLEN EDEN** 2 brm house near shopping centre and train. \$270 tel 483-86152

**B** **GLEN EDEN** 3 brm OF house with garage, garden. \$330pw inc bills. Phone 915-33291, 0273 463-1106

**C** **GREY LYNN** 1 brm apt, close to shopping centre, \$190pw, n/s only. Ph 485 63142

- The places above are all in Auckland, New Zealand. Which place would you like to live in? Why?

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### A Listening - Phoning a landlord

- 1 Listen to Susan telephoning a landlord. Which advertisement in Get ready is she phoning about?

#### Learning tip

Read the exercise before you listen and make sure you know what you are listening for. For example, is it a number or a word?

- 2 Read Susan's notes on the right. Then listen again and complete the gaps. (mins = minutes)

#### Did you know ...?

These are some common abbreviations in newspaper advertisements.

brm/bed = bedroom

ff = fully furnished

pw = per week

inc = including

apt = apartment

n/s = non smoker

min = minimum

tel/ph = telephone

People say 'flat' in the UK and 'apartment' in the US. 'Unit' is used in New Zealand and Australia. This is a small house attached to one or more similar houses.

Address: House number: \* 36

\* Street

Close to - shops: \* mins walk

- train station: \* mins walk

Two bedrooms: both double bedrooms? \* YES / NO

Large garden: YES / NO

Visit flat at \* pm.

I'm phoning about the house

Landlord: Hello.

Susan: Ah hello. I'm phoning about the house in Glen Eden that's advertised in the paper today.

Landlord: Yes.

Susan: I was just wondering where it is exactly.

Landlord: 36 Arawa Street.

Susan: Sorry, 36

Landlord: Arawa Street, A-R-A-W-A. It's number 36.

Susan: Oh OK. The ad says it's close to the shopping centre and train station. How far away are they?

Landlord: Yeah, it's really close. Um, it's probably about a ten-minute walk to the shops and five minutes to the train station, so it's not far from anything.

Susan: Oh good. Um, the bedrooms. There are two, aren't there? What size are they?

Landlord: Yeah, one's a bit bigger than the other um but they're medium size I guess. about

Susan: Would they both fit double beds in them?

Landlord: Ah the bigger one would, but the other one probably only fits a single bed. Ah they're both very sunny rooms.

Susan: Oh OK. Is there a garden?

Landlord: Ah not really. There's a small area where you can hang your washing, but no garden ... You can go and have a look at it if you want.

Susan: OK, yeah.

Landlord: And your name is?

Susan: Susan.

Landlord: OK Susan, if you're interested, I'll be down there at 5.30 if you want to come and have a look.

Susan: Oh OK, thanks ... Bye.

Landlord: Bye

**Aim of the unit:**

The main aim of this conversation is enabling my students to practice real-world communication skills, especially in situations where they need to inquire about something (like renting a property).

**The key learning objectives for students could be:**

- **Asking and Answering Questions:** The conversation teaches how to ask clear and relevant questions when inquiring about a property, such as about location, amenities, and size.
- **Polite Communication:** It provides an example of how to communicate politely over the phone. Asking questions with phrases like, "I was just wondering..." or "Sorry, 36?" shows how to maintain politeness while gathering important information.
- **Clarifying Information:** Students can learn how to ask for clarification, as Susan does when she asks for the address spelling or to confirm the size of the rooms. This skill is important for effective communication.
- **Practical Vocabulary:** The students can also learn specific vocabulary related to renting, such as terms like "shopping centre," "train station," "double bed," "single bed," and "garden." These words are useful in both casual and formal situations.
- **Organizing and Making Plans:** The conversation concludes with the arrangement of a property viewing, showing students how to set up meetings or appointments in everyday situations.
- The conversation serves several key purposes:
- **Clarifying the Property Details:** Susan wants to know the exact location of the property, the size of the bedrooms, and the amenities available (such as the garden).
- **Understanding the Distance to Local Amenities:** She asks about the proximity to the shopping center and train station to gauge the convenience of the location.

- **Setting Up a Viewing:** After gathering the information she needs, Susan and the landlord agree on a time for her to view the property in person.
- **Building Communication:** Both parties are establishing polite and clear communication, ensuring that all details are understood before proceeding further
- This is a great example of a phone conversation between a potential tenant (Susan) and a landlord.
- **Key Points of the Conversation:**
- **Initial Greeting and Inquiry:**
- Susan starts by saying, "Hello. I'm phoning about the house in Glen Eden that's advertised in the paper today." This is a polite and clear way to start a phone conversation about a specific topic.
- **Distance to Amenities:**
- **Scheduling a Viewing:**
- Susan confirms the time, and they finish the conversation politely.
- **Language Tips:**
- **Clarification:** Notice how Susan asks for clarification when she doesn't catch the address: "Sorry, 36?" and "Arawa Street, A-R-A-W-A."
- **Polite Questions:** Susan uses polite questions such as, "I was just wondering..." and "How far away are they?" These are good ways to ask for information without sounding too direct.

### **Conclusion of the Conversation (For Your Students):**

Takeaway for Students:

Confirming next steps: After gathering all the necessary information, the next step is set (the viewing), which is a key part of effective communication.

Ending conversations politely: The conversation ends with "OK, thanks... Bye" and "Bye," which is a natural, polite way to close the conversation.

### **Benefits of Learning This Conversation:**

1. **Real-Life Application:** This is a practical, everyday conversation that students can use when searching for apartments, houses, or even in other professional or service-related contexts.
  2. **Building Confidence in Communication:** It helps students practice how to ask for and provide information, which will make them more confident in similar real-life situations, whether on the phone or face-to-face.
  3. **Developing Listening and Speaking Skills:** By focusing on how to listen actively (e.g., understanding the address, details about the bedrooms) and speak clearly (e.g., asking follow-up questions), students can improve their listening and speaking skills in English.
  4. **Cultural Understanding:** Students also get a glimpse of how property rental communication works in English-speaking countries, which can be useful if they ever need to move or travel abroad.
  5. **Role-Play Opportunities:** This conversation can be turned into a role-playing activity where students practice being both the landlord and the tenant, improving their fluency and interaction in real-world scenarios.
- **Offer to Visit:** The landlord offers a visit with the phrase: "You can go and have a look at it if you want." This shows how to offer something politely.

