

Recording appointments

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To understand dates and times over the telephone
- To write down the dates and times where they can be referred to again (e.g. in a diary or appointments calendar)



RESOURCES

- Examples of diaries / calendars
- Copies of Resources 1–3
- Appointment information on cards / sticky notes to be devised by teacher (Activity 1 ESOL)
- Audio equipment [32–34](#)

RELATED THEMES

Making appointments (pages 164–174)

HEALTH SKILLS

Much time is lost to the NHS through missed appointments. Even more importantly, a missed appointment delays the health care needed by the patient. This theme aims to ensure that learners are aware of the importance of keeping and recording appointment times and dates.

Related health information

www.patient.co.uk/
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/

SKILLS FOR LIFE

In order to be able to pick out appointment dates and times and record them on a calendar or diary to refer to later, learners need to:

- listen effectively
- check understanding
- choose and use a system that will enable them to remember the appointment.

Core curriculum

Activities in this theme will contribute to learning in the following curriculum areas:

- read and record dates (**N**MSS1/E2.3)
- understand and record times (**N**MSS1/E3.3)
- listen for detail on the phone and face to face (**L**SLlr/E3.2).

- Give each person an 'appointment' date and time verbally and ask them to remember it without writing it down.
- Discuss the consequences of missing appointments: 'What can happen if you miss an appointment, especially a hospital appointment?' (Delay in getting medical help / diagnosis; somebody else could have had your appointment slot; time lost for health services and you; cost implications because of added paperwork / bureaucracy needed to rebook appointment and to make sure staff are available; feeling a bit out of control / chaotic / cross with yourself, etc.)
- Check whether learners can recall the earlier appointment time you gave them before the discussion about missing appointments. The chances are that at least some learners will have forgotten. Explain how easy it is to forget the things we really need to remember, especially when we don't write things down.
- Discuss what learners usually do when they need to remember an appointment time: 'How do you remember appointment times? Do you write them down, keep a calendar, or tell someone else?' 'Does anyone record the date and time on their mobile phone?'
- Ask learners if they have ever forgotten an appointment, and discuss the reason for this.
- Finally, point out that everyone needs to change an appointment sometimes because something unexpected crops up. Discuss the best way to do this (phone up as soon as you know you can't make it, explain the situation and ask for another appointment; don't just leave it and not turn up!).

How easy do you find it to remember appointment times?

What can you do to help you remember an appointment?

Can you record appointment times on your mobile?

Do you use abbreviations when you make a note of dates and times?

ACTIVITY 1

Introduce different ways of talking about and writing times and dates

- Hand out Resource 1. Discuss what is happening in the pictures, and what the two documents are.
- Ask learners to find the appointment dates and times in the speech-bubbles and their written equivalents on the calendar and appointment card.
- Ask learners to suggest different ways of saying or writing the same dates and times. Display their suggestions. As appropriate, focus attention on:
 - the spelling of days and months
 - abbreviations for days and months (e.g. Tue, Thu / Thurs, Oct)
 - the use of 24-hour clock and am / pm for times
 - how to write dates and times in full and with abbreviations (e.g. Thursday 2 October at 9:30 am; Thurs 2nd Oct, 9:30)
 - how to write dates in numbers (e.g. 2/10/07).
- Ask learners to underline any abbreviations used on the calendar and the appointment card.

Support

Work together to draw up a list of months of the year, in order, with common abbreviations (e.g. January – Jan). Learners could keep this in a diary or notebook to refer to whenever they need to.

ESOL

Provide information for four appointments written out in full (e.g. 'I've got an appointment with Doctor Green on the fourth of July at quarter to five.'). Working in pairs, encourage learners to discuss what notes and abbreviations to use to record the details on a diary page.

ACTIVITY 2 32–34

Practise listening to and recording appointment dates and times

- Explain that learners are going to hear three different people asking the receptionist at a GP practice for an appointment.
- Ask learners to listen carefully for the date and time, and record them. The first appointment should be recorded on the diary page (Resource 2). Details of the second appointment should be written on the calendar page (Resource 3). For the third appointment, encourage learners to choose where to record the appointment (e.g. a personal diary or calendar, on their mobile phone, etc.).
- Play the three conversations one by one and as often as learners would like to hear them.
- Compare answers at the end.
- As follow-up, suggest that learners work in pairs. One learner takes the role of the receptionist, and the other makes an appointment. Give the receptionist an appointments book, diary or calendar to use to discuss a date and time. Learners can then swap roles.

Support

Talk about the strategies learners could use every day to help them with appointment times and dates (e.g. asking for the date and time to be posted or e-mailed to them or to someone else who could help).

ESOL

- Learners will need plenty of practice in taking down appointments. Read out some details for learners to take down (e.g. 'I've got a space at 9:30 on Monday the 2nd. That's with Dr Ahmed. Is that any good?').
- Discuss what learners can do and say if they have problems (e.g. check details they're not sure about; ask for a repetition; repeat back the details at the end of the phone call – 'So Tuesday the fourth at 9:30 with Dr Khan.').

TIP

- It really helps to carry a diary, mobile phone or electronic organiser at all times.
- It is best to avoid keeping notes on scraps of paper, which can easily get lost.

What key information would you note down to remember your appointment?

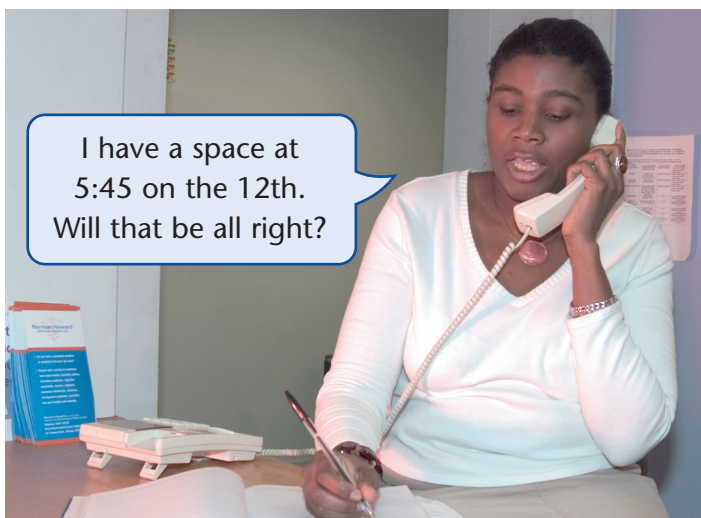
Action

- If they need to do so, encourage learners to make an appointment and share their recording system with the rest of the group.
- Find ways in which learners can get hold of / buy a diary or calendar. Extend this by asking them to record any appointments or important dates they need to remember.
- Over the next few weeks, if possible / appropriate, encourage learners to keep track of further appointments and commitments they have (e.g. family visits, children's pick-up times, doctors' appointments, etc.).

How do you prefer to record your appointments?

Recording appointments

RESOURCE 1



Your next appointment is:

Thurs 2nd Nov, 9:30, Dr Ahmed



Certainly, Mr Sikora. Would half past nine on the 2nd be suitable? That's a Thursday. I'll write it down for you.

Recording appointments

RESOURCE 2

32

24th Tuesday		
AM		
Lunch		
PM		
25th Wednesday		
AM		
Lunch		
PM		

Recording appointments

RESOURCE 3



DECEMBER						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Recording appointments

ACTIVITY 2 / Resources 2–3

Suggested answers:

Conversation 1 (Resource 2)

24th Tuesday
AM
<i>Dr Green 9:40 am</i>

24th Tuesday
AM
<i>9:40, Dr Green</i>

Conversation 2 (Resource 3)

DECEMBER						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Nurse, 10:15 am

DECEMBER						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9

10:15 to see nurse

Conversation 3

Dr Golden, Wed 11th Oct, 4:50 pm

OR

Dr Golden, Weds 11 Oct, 4:50

ACTIVITY 2



Conversation 1

Receptionist: Ashton Medical Centre, can I help you?

Patient: Hello. Can I make an appointment to see the doctor, please?

Receptionist: Yes. Are you registered with us?

Patient: Yes.

Receptionist: And your name, please ...?

Patient: Stephanie Rowlands.

Receptionist: Sorry ... did you say 'Rowlands'?

Patient: Yes, Rowlands ... that's R-O-W-L-A-N-D-S.

Receptionist: Rowlands ... right. Address ...?

Patient: 35 Shelley Street.

Receptionist: Which doctor would you like to see?

Patient: I saw Dr Green last time. Can I see her again?

Receptionist: I don't have any appointments with Dr Green until the 24th.

Patient: That's in two weeks, isn't it? What day of the week is the 24th?

Receptionist: It's a Tuesday.

Patient: I think that's OK ... What time?

Receptionist: I could fit you in at twenty to ten.

Patient: OK then. That'll be fine.

Receptionist: So that's 9:40 on the 24th with Dr Green.

Patient: Thanks very much. Bye.

Receptionist: It's a pleasure. Goodbye.



Conversation 2

Receptionist: Can I help you?

Patient: I need to make another appointment to see the nurse in eight weeks' time.

Receptionist: Eight weeks – that will be the 5th. Oh, but Aneeta is doing a different clinic on that day. I can make it for the 6th.

Patient: The 6th of December? What day of the week is that?

Receptionist: That's a Wednesday.

Patient: I can't make a Wednesday. Is there another day I can come?

Receptionist: How about Friday?

Patient: Yes, Friday's fine. In the morning.

Receptionist: 10:15?

Patient: OK.

Receptionist: So that's quarter past ten on the 8th of December. Let me write it down for you.

Patient: Thanks very much.



Conversation 3

Receptionist: Ashton Medical Centre, can I help you?

Patient: I need to see the doctor, please.

Receptionist: Is it urgent?

Patient: No, but I need to come this week.

Receptionist: I can give you an appointment with Dr Golden on Wednesday.

Patient: That'll be fine.

Receptionist: I can fit you in just before lunch, at 12:20.

Patient: That would be difficult for me. Do you have a later time?

Receptionist: How about ten past three? Or ten to five?

Patient: Ten to five would be better for me.

Receptionist: OK, so that's ten to five on Wednesday October the 11th. What's your name, please?