

Would you mind... ?

Making requests and responding to "Would you mind... ?" and "Do you mind... ?"

1. Discuss

Discuss the following with a partner.

1. What would you say if a friend asked to borrow money?
2. When did someone last help you? What did they do?
3. When did you last help someone? What did you do?



Photo by Ron Lach

2. Reading

A. Read the dialogue. Change roles and practice again.

- A Hi Matt. Come in. I'm so glad you could make it.
- B Hi Melanie!
- A Welcome to my new house.
- B Wow! This looks great.
- A Thank you. There's still some more work to do, but I'm pleased with how it's turned out so far.
- B Would you mind if I looked around?
- A No, not at all. Make yourself at home. I'll answer the door. I think Mike and Sarah have just arrived.
- B Great, thank you... Ladies, sorry to interrupt. Melanie, would you mind if I used the bathroom upstairs? Mike is in the one downstairs.
- A Sorry, but there is a leak in the upstairs bathroom. Would you mind using the one in the basement?
- B Sure, I don't mind.

B. Answer the questions about the dialogue.

1. Who has a new house?
2. How many people are in the house at the end of the conversation?
3. Who wants to use the bathroom upstairs?
4. What is wrong with the bathroom upstairs?

3. Making Formal Requests

A. You can use indirect phrases such as "Would/Do you mind... ?" to make formal requests Review the following with a partner.

1. Asking someone to do something:

	Gerund	Direct request
a.	Would you mind waiting?	Could you wait?
b.	Would you mind recommending a good restaurant near here?	What's a good restaurant near here?

2. Asking for permission to do something:

	If	Subject	Verb	Object
a.	Would you mind	if I	opened	the window?
b.	Would you mind	if I	waited?	

3. "Do you mind" is more informal and typically used when we expect the other person to be fine with the request.

Do you mind if I open the window?

B. Read about responding to 'Would you mind...?' requests.

Think of "Would you mind...?" like the question "Would you be upset if...?"

1. If you don't have a problem with the request made, you can answer:

- a. No, I wouldn't/don't (mind). b. Go ahead. c. Not at all.

e.g. **A** Would you mind if I opened the window?
 B No, not at all.

2. If you do have a problem with the request made, you can respond:

- a. Yes, I would/do (mind). b. I'm sorry, but...

e.g. **A** Would you mind if I opened the window?
 B Yes, I would. I'm cold.
 I'm sorry, but I'm cold.

4. Practice

A. Write formal requests for the following situations.

1. I'm cold!

.....

2. You want to make a cup of tea.

.....

3. You want the person you are speaking to to make you a cup of tea.

.....

4. I'm so poor this week.

.....

5. Your friend Amy wants to play some music.

.....

6. You want to change the channel on the TV.

.....

B. Ask your partner, teacher, or other students in your class the following. Give and refuse permission.

Would you mind	Name	Response
1. use your phone

2. take your photo

3. borrow some money

4. sit next to you

5. borrow your pen

6. copy your homework

C. Give feedback about your requests and responses from other students.

Would you mind... ?



Level: Intermediate: B1

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Language: Function: Asking and answering questions.
Forms: Conditional forms. Modal and auxiliary verbs. Verb forms.

Teaching time: 90 minutes.

Overview: Students practice making formal requests and asking for permission with the formal, indirect questions "Would you mind...?" and "Do you mind...?" Phrases and expressions used to give and refuse permission are also practiced. A communicative activity has students asking for, giving, and refusing permission.

1. DISCUSS

A warm up activity helps set the mood for the topic/lesson and is a good opportunity to assess students' ability to generate language as well as elicit target vocabulary used in the lesson. If students struggle to engage with their partners, ask questions to encourage participation. Allow a few minutes for students to complete the activity and continue the conversation if interesting.

2. READING

A. In pairs, students read the dialogue. Answer any questions that arise about vocabulary.

B. Individually or on pairs, students answer the questions about the dialogue. Students can compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences or check answers as a class.

1. Melanie has a new house.
2. There are four people in the house.
3. Matt wants to use the bathroom upstairs.
4. There is a leak.

3. MAKING FORMAL REQUESTS

A. In pairs or as a class, students review 1-3 about using formal indirect expressions to ask for permission. Discuss if necessary.

NOTE: With the 'Would you mind' structure, use the verb in the past form as the entire sentence is a second conditional sentence. 'Would' in 'would you mind' refers to an uncertain situation. 'Do you mind' is less formal in comparison to 'would you mind'. 'Would' refers to uncertainty in conditional sentences, and 'do you mind' is comparatively more certain.

B. In pairs or as a class, students review 1-2 about responding to indirect expressions to ask for permission. There are, of course, more ways to respond to a request than provided. Discuss if necessary.

4. PRACTICE

A. Individually, students write formal requests for the situations. Students can compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences or elicit answers from students by presenting the situations. Answers will vary depending on how creative your students are.

1. Would you mind if I closed the window? Do you mind if I turn on the heater?
2. Would you mind if I made a cup of tea? Do you mind if I make a cup of tea?
3. Would you mind making (me) a cup of tea?
4. Would you mind lending me some money?

5. Would you mind if Amy played some music? Do you mind if Amy plays some music?

6. Would you mind if I changed the channel? Do you mind if I change the channel?

B. Depending on class size, students walk around asking 'Would you mind...?' or 'Do you mind...?' questions using the prompts 1-6. If working in pairs, students can ignore the spaces provided for multiple answers. Students practice asking for, giving and refusing permission and record the responses. Encourage students to answer honestly.

C. Students give feedback about their requests and responses from their partner or other students in the class. Who gave and refused permission.