

# Using the telephone

## A Leaflet for Students



Telephone Message for: *Peter Smith*

Date *24th August* Time *12.30*

Caller's Name *Ronald Johnson*

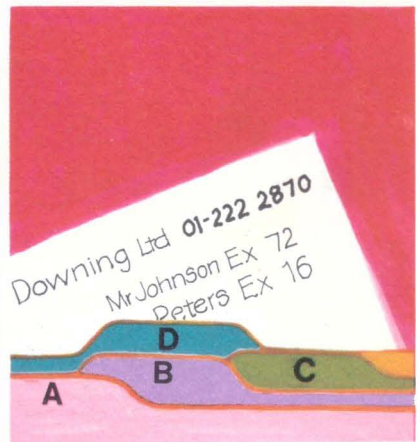
Address *42, Heathfield Road  
Manchester.*

Tel No *061-834 9898*

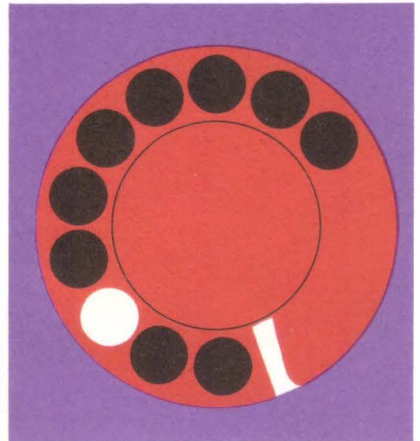
Message *Phone as soon as  
possible please  
URGENT.*

Message taken by *Susan Shaw*

You will find telephones wherever you go to work – in shops, in offices, in hospitals, in factories. This leaflet tells you how to make and answer calls. It also explains some of the 'telephone words' you will hear when you are at work.



Post Office  
Telecommunications



# Making a call

Top. After checking them in the telephone directory put frequently used numbers in your office address book for future use.

Bottom. Many offices use card indexes for recording telephone numbers.



Make sure that you really know the number you want – your guess may be a wrong one. If you are in any doubt, check it in the telephone directory.

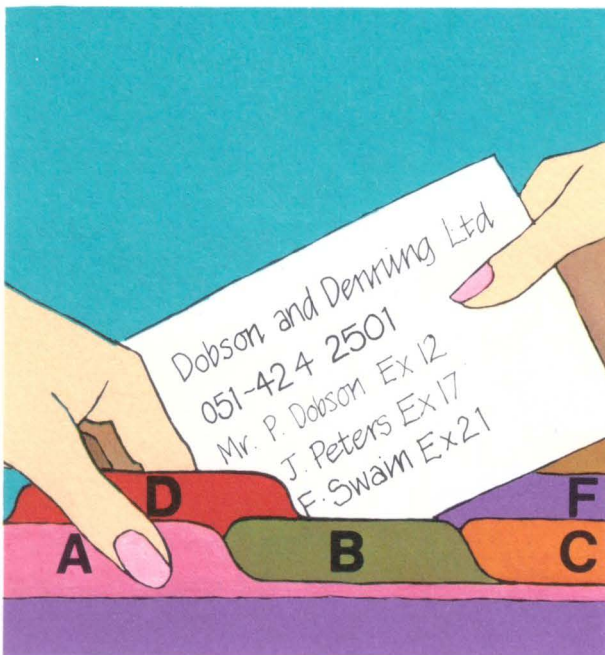
Most calls can be dialled, so refer to your dialling instructions to see if you can dial the call yourself.

Dial your number carefully, taking the dial right round to the finger stop and letting it return freely for each digit. If you make a mistake while dialling, replace the receiver for a moment or two, and then start again.

Please do not be impatient! After you have dialled, give the equipment at the exchange time to connect the call; normally it takes no more than a moment or so, but on some calls it may take a little longer.

When your call is answered say to whom you want to talk and then say who you are. If you know the number you are calling has a switchboard, give the extension number you require. If you do not know it, enquire and make a note of it for future use.

For calls which you cannot dial yourself, ask the operator for the number you require. When making one via your private switchboard operator, rather than asking her for 'Smith's at Sheffield', quote the full number. If possible, stay on the line while she dials the call for you.

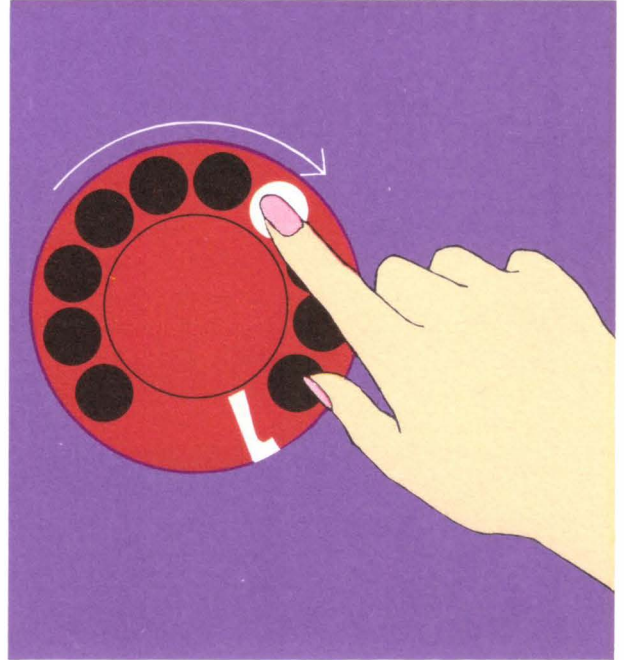




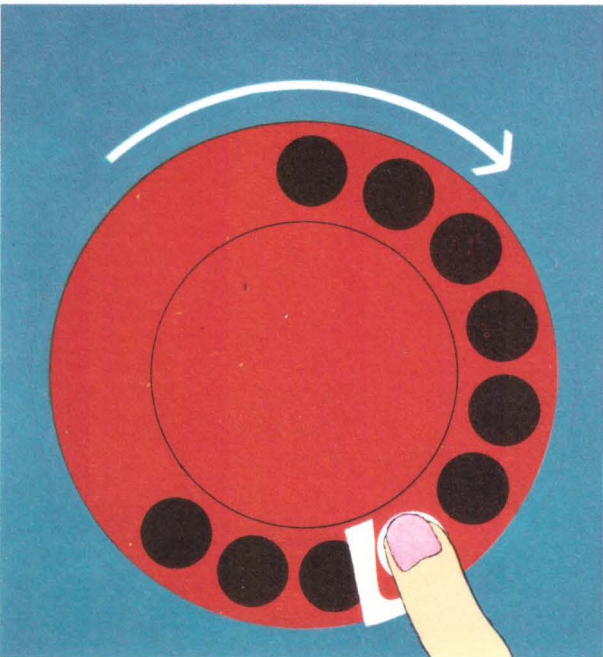
Top. Hold the receiver so that the hand with which you usually write is free to take down messages.



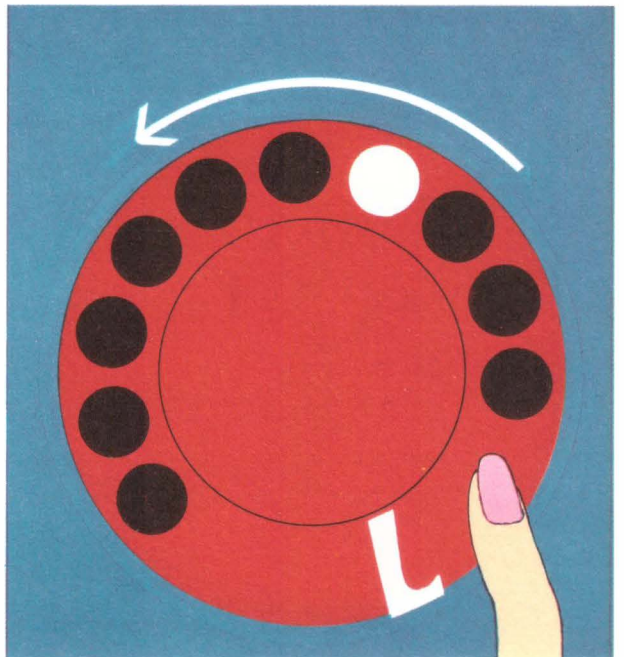
1. Dial the number very carefully.
2. Dial right round to the finger stop.
3. Let the dial return freely for each digit.



1



2



3

# What the tones tell you

**Dialling tone** – a low pitched burr – tells you that the exchange equipment is ready for you to start dialling. If you dial before you hear this tone you may get a wrong number.

**Ringing tone** – a repeated double beat – tells you that the called number is being rung. Allow a reasonable time for an answer; if there is no reply, replace the receiver and try again later.

**Engaged tone** – a repeated single note usually means the number you are calling is in use, but it can also mean that the exchange equipment is busy. In either case, replace the receiver and try again in about five minutes.

**Number unobtainable tone** – a continuous high-pitched note – tells you that the number is either out of service or spare. If you hear this tone, replace your receiver, check that you are dialling the correct dialling code and number and then call again. If you again hear the tone, call the Post Office operator and explain what has happened.

**Pay tone** – high -pitched rapid pips – means you are being called from a 'Pay-on-answer' coin box. The caller must insert money in order to stop Pay tone and speak to you. Give the caller time to put his money in the box. You will also hear this tone when you make a call from a 'Pay-on-answer' coin box: it means that your call has been answered and you must put money in the box before you can speak to the called person.

If you do not know the sound of these tones the exchange operator will be pleased to demonstrate them to you.

# Answering the telephone

Always answer your telephone promptly when it rings, and announce your identity. When answering calls which have come via your private exchange switchboard give your name, department, etc – whichever would be most helpful to your callers. Have a pencil and paper at hand so that you can write down a message; and pick up the receiver with your left hand so that your right hand is free for writing (vice versa, of course, if you are left-handed).

When you take a message, repeat it back to make sure that you have taken it down correctly.

Not forgetting to include the caller's name and telephone number.

You may have to leave the telephone to make an enquiry and collect information. If so, tell your caller how long you expect to be and ask if he would prefer you to call him back.

Arrange for your calls to be answered in your absence.

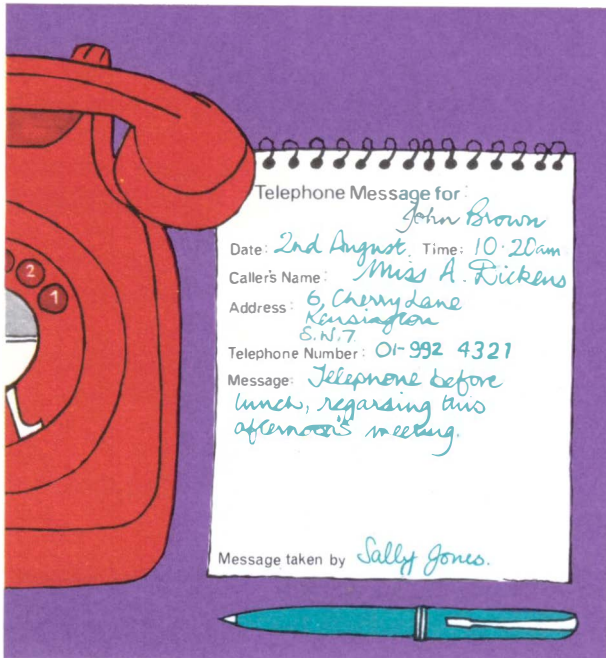
Do not be afraid to answer an unattended telephone – the caller will appreciate it if you offer to take a message. Say whose telephone it is or give the number.

Do ensure that any message you take for someone is given to him and as soon as possible.

# Don't forget

Top. An example of a telephone message sheet.

Bottom. A telephone alphabet.



Telephone Message for: *John Brown*  
Date: *2nd August* Time: *10.20am*  
Caller's Name: *Miss A. Dickens*  
Address: *6, Cherry Lane*  
*Kensington*  
*S.W.7*  
Telephone Number: *01-992 4321*  
Message: *Telephone before*  
*lunch, regarding this*  
*afternoon's meeting.*  
Message taken by *Sally Jones.*



Telephone Alphabet	
A	Alfred
B	Benjamin
C	Charlie
D	David
E	Edward
F	Frederick
G	George
H	Harry
I	Isaac
J	Jack
K	King
L	London
M	Mary
N	Neillie
O	Oliver
P	Peter
Q	Queen
R	Robert
S	Samuel
T	Tommy
U	Uncle
V	Victor
W	William
X	X-Ray
Y	Yellow
Z	Zebra

that there is no need to shout on the telephone, talk quietly but distinctly *directly* into the mouthpiece

to lower the pitch of your voice and speak more slowly if you have difficulty in being heard

to make use of the telephone alphabet if you want to spell out a word

that numbers can easily be confused when passed over the telephone

- say 'fife', so that 5 is not confused with 9
- say 'oh', not 'nought' which can be confused with 8

to replace the receiver carefully but firmly after each call; you cannot receive calls if the receiver is not properly on the rest

to *replace the receiver* and wait for the other person to call you if you are cut off on an incoming call

that there is more information on using the telephone service in the first few pages of a telephone directory, dialling instructions and also in the Post Office Guide

that the efficient use of the telephone can save much frustration and waste of time, thus a great deal of money, for 'Time is Money' in the business world.



# Do you know?

**The telephone directory** lists, in alphabetical order, all the telephone subscribers in a locality. There are about seventy telephone directories covering the whole country; in London there are so many subscribers that the directory is divided into several volumes. You will not always find entries where you might expect them; local authority services – for example, libraries and schools – may be listed under the name of the local or county authority; hotels under the name of the manager, and so on. New volumes of telephone directories contain advice on finding numbers.

**The Yellow Page directory** lists all business subscribers under their respective trade or profession, for example, Builders, Builders' Merchants, Building Societies. A Yellow Page directory is usually bound with the alphabetical directory.

**A dialling instruction booklet** is given to each telephone subscriber who has trunk dialling facilities. It lists the exchanges that can be dialled, together with the dialling codes and charges. It also gives you advice on the use of the trunk-dialling system including information on how to call all-figure numbers. If Subscriber Trunk Dialling (STD) is not available from a telephone, there will usually be a *dialling code card* listing the codes for nearby exchanges that can be dialled.

**All-figure telephone numbers.** Telephones in and around London, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester have been given all-figure numbers. These do not have exchange names, for example, this is an all-figure number: 01-965 0721.

**Personal calls** are all connected by the Post Office operator who will ask you for the name of the person you are calling as well as the telephone number. The call will not be charged for until the person you want is available, but a fee is payable whether or not the call is ultimately successful. If STD is available from the telephone you are using, you can obtain the same facility for yourself by ringing the number and, if necessary, making an appointment to ring again when the person you want is available.

**Transferred charge calls.** The person you are calling may be prepared to pay for the call. If you want the charge for a call transferred, you should start by telling the operator when you make the call; she will want to know your name so that she can ask the called person if he is prepared to pay for the call.

## Emergency calls

If you want the police, fire, or ambulance services in an emergency, dial '999'. You may also dial '999' for the coastguard. If you want to make an ordinary call to one of these emergency services, call the number shown in the telephone directory. Be sure that you know how to make an emergency call from the telephone you use; if it is an extension telephone, to dial '999' is not necessarily the correct thing to do.

**Emergency calls are free of charge.**

**For details of other material on the Post Office for use in schools, please enquire in writing from your Telephone Manager or Head Postmaster.**