



## Recognising formal and informal situations - answers

### Example 1

Question: Can I borrow your jacket?

Answer: **The speaker is probably talking to someone close. We don't usually borrow someone's jacket unless we know the person very well. The situation isn't difficult because the speakers know each other well. "Can I..." is quite informal, and the speaker doesn't say please.**

### Example 2

Question: Would you mind if I gave your name as a referee?

Answer: **The speaker is probably talking to someone in a position of authority. The situation is quite formal. The speaker hopes the person will agree. The reference could be for a job or something else important. "Would you mind..." is quite formal and polite, and the sentence structure is complicated. An informal request could be "Can I use you as a referee?"**

Check to see if the answers below are similar to yours. There are no right or wrong answers.

Situation	Speakers - close / distant?	Situation easy / difficult?	What could you say?
Asking for information about GP surgery hours.	Distant	Easy	Could you tell me what time the surgery closes today please?
Inviting a colleague to a meeting.	Could be close or distant	Could be routine or something difficult	Are you coming to the team meeting? It's in room 22.
Arranging a night out with a friend.	Close	Easy	Do you fancy a film on Saturday?
Phoning to change an appointment with your child's school.	Distant	Could be difficult	I'm sorry I won't be able to come to see you on Thursday. Could I possibly come on Friday instead?
Checking what time your teenage daughter is coming home tonight.	Close	Could be difficult!	Make sure you're home by ten.

Discuss any differences with a friend.