

# Making Complaints Politely at a Hotel



Intermediate (B1-B2)

**Part 1. Read the statements. Which one sounds most like you when something goes wrong? Explain why.**

- I usually complain straight away.
- I wait and see if the problem fixes itself.
- I complain, but I worry about sounding rude.

**Part 2. Discuss the questions.**

1. Have you ever had to complain in a hotel? What was the problem?
2. How did you feel before complaining — confident, nervous, tired, annoyed?
3. Do you think complaining is harder when you're travelling? Why?

**Part 3. Imagine this situation:**

**You arrive at your hotel late at night. You open the door to your room and immediately notice a problem.**

What is your **first thought**, not what you say?

**Examples:**

- "I don't want to be difficult."
- "I paid too much for this."
- "Maybe I can just deal with it."

**Part 4. Look below at the problems someone might have at a hotel.**

- the room is noisy
- the bathroom isn't clean
- the air-conditioning doesn't work
- the room type is different from what you booked
- the Wi-Fi is very slow
- the room doesn't look like the pictures online

**Discuss:**

- Which would annoy you the most?
- Which would you definitely complain about?

**Part 5. Read the sentences below and discuss the questions.**

1. The room is very noisy.
2. Sorry to bother you, but the room is very noisy.
3. I booked a quiet room. This isn't acceptable.
4. I was hoping for a quieter room, if possible.

**Discuss:**

- Which sound calm and polite?
- Which sound more direct?
- Which would you actually use in a hotel?



**Part 6. Match each phrase to its purpose.**

**Phrase**

**Purpose**

1. I'm afraid there's a small problem with...

2. I was hoping you could help me with this.

3. Would it be possible to...?

4. It doesn't seem to be working.

5. Sorry to bother you, but...

6. There appears to be an issue with...

7. I booked this room because...

8. This isn't quite what I expected.

**A. Softening the complaint**

**B. Explaining the problem**

**C. Giving context or a reason**

**D. Asking for action or a solution**

**Part 7. Complete the sentences using one phrase from the previous exercise.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ the Wi-Fi doesn't seem to be working properly.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ the room — the internet connection keeps dropping.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ with the air-conditioning in my room.
4. \_\_\_\_\_, as I need the room to be quiet for work.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I needed a quiet space to work.
6. \_\_\_\_\_, especially compared to the photos on the website.

**Part 8. Read the situations from part 4 again. For each one, what would you say to the receptionist? Use polite phrases from part 6.**

- the room is noisy
- the bathroom isn't clean
- the air-conditioning doesn't work
- the room type is different from what you booked
- the Wi-Fi is very slow
- the room doesn't look like the pictures online

## REFLECTION

**Complete the sentences with your own ideas.**

1. One phrase I feel confident using now is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. One thing I want to improve when I complain is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. One situation outside hotels where this language is useful is \_\_\_\_\_.

